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OFF THE ROCKS

STORIES OF THE
DEEP-SEA FISHERFOLK
OF LABRADOR

WILFRED T. GRENFELL

OFF THE ROCKS

DWELLERS IN LABRADOR

OFF THE ROCKS

STORIES OF THE
DEEP-SEA FISHERFOLK
OF LABRADOR

BY
WILFRED T. GRENFELL
M.D., Oxford University; Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George; Member of Royal College of Surgeons, England; Master Mariner; Justice of the Peace; Agent for Lloyds, Underwriters; Superintendent Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen.

With an Introduction by
HENRY VAN DYKE

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INTRODUCTION

It is impossible to write a formal introduction to this book.

I remember the wild northern shores from which these stories come; gray rocks; dark little forests; restless, changeful seas. There is no introduction to that land, no guide book, no cicerone. Sailing over the sombre blue of waves that never quite forget the fierce cold of winter, you approach the sheer and silent coast, tranquil, reserved, impassive alike to roaring wind and caressing sunlight. You enter a little harbor, sheltered by naked islands. All that it has to offer you is yours at once: the rounded gray slopes of stone, the long recumbent hills, the black rocks breaking the water, a river valley, perhaps, marked by evergreen woods, a few wooden houses clustered along the edge of the sea and blending almost imperceptibly with the landscape. This is all; but over this scene, so cool and quiet in color, so open in its large outlines, Nature is weaving her spell of wonder

WQR 19 FEB '36

and mystery, with lights of morning and evening, now opaline and seductive, now clear as crystal,—a spell so deep that it subdues the heart, and makes one feel as if that bare and lonely beauty were the only reality, and all the richer, softer regions of earth were but dreams and illusions.

I remember also some of the people who spend their lives under that wide enchantment of the double wilderness; homely, rugged folk who cling to their habitations among the rocks with an infinite, pathetic patience, as if the world had no better home to offer them; courageous, hardy fishermen, who come back year after year to these wind-vexed, uncertain waters, as if there were no safer fields where they could glean their scanty harvest. Men and women of the plain human kind, these—no pretense and no formality—rather silent in their ways, for the most part, but frank, kindly, helpful, ready to meet you without an introduction.

I remember a night last winter when I sat beside my study fire in the small hours, listening to the man who has given his life to the service of these people—a brave, steady, quiet voice, telling of difficulties overcome, and dangers

faced, and victories won against the black odds of ignorance and disease, making rather light of peril and hardship so far as his own part was concerned, brightening the darkest scenes with touches of irrepressible humor, giving pictures of human character and conduct so real and vivid that they warmed the heart with sympathy, and bearing testimony not to be doubted of the power of plain religion to comfort and save plain folk in time of trouble. It was like hearing a report from one of the messengers who went out in the beginning, when Christianity was young and simple and fearless, to tell men about Jesus of Nazareth and help them for his sake.

Here, in these stories, I see again that wild, unforgettable coast, those little-speaking, much-enduring fishermen and "liveyeres;" I hear again the strong, manly, tranquil voice of Wilfred Grenfell telling the things that befell him and his friends. What does such a book need of an introduction?

You who love Nature, not trimmed and embroidered, but in the largeness and mystery of her wild charm; you who love humanity, not disguised and trained for the stage, but frankly living its own life and expressing its primitive

feelings; you who know a man when you see him, and like him best when he does things; you who feel that religion is just as real as Nature, just as real as humanity, and that brave adventures may be achieved in the name of Christ,—this book is for you. This is the real thing.

HENRY VAN DYKE.

Avalon, January 1, 1906.

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OFF THE ROCKS

OFF THE ROCKS

It was Saturday night in the early fall that in our large mission hospital schooner we anchored among Adlavik Islands. A lot of schooners from the north were here "making" the fish which they had caught farther north. Many of them had called to pick up their freighters, or poorer folk, who had to come down to the Labrador fishery for a living, and yet had been too poor to get credit for a schooner of their own. They had therefore taken passage on some already crowded craft, in return paying twenty-five cents to the master for every quintal of hundredweight of fish they should catch during the summer.

Among these, lying close beside us at anchor, was a small craft, labeled on the bow the Firefly, though if ever in her early days she had possessed any claim to display the fascination of her namesake, there was nothing about her to betray it now.

As I walked on the deck of our well-appointed

little craft, I could not help feeling a real sorrow of heart for any man who had to wrest a living from the North Atlantic in a craft so terribly ill-fitted for the purpose.

Her hull was obviously the rude design of some unskilled fisherman, and was innocent of any pretension to paint. It was probably the devoted work of the skipper, the father of a family of boys, who no doubt had helped him in that one great step towards an independent living—the ownership of a schooner. Curves and fine lines are difficult to obtain, and, compared with our graceful hull, this poor little craft looked merely a bunch of boards. Our planks and timbers were of stout oak and were all copper-fastened. Our humble neighbor's were of the local soft wood, no doubt from the bay in which he lived, and were held together with, at the very best, galvanized iron nails. Her masts and spars of local spruce compared poorly indeed with ours of staunch Norwegian pitch pine. Her running gear was obviously old, and even her halyards were spliced in many places. Our stout canvas sails made the Firefly's old patched rags of canvas look insufficient indeed to face the October gales she was sure to encounter

STEAMSHIP STRATHCONA, THE MISSION VESSEL,
SHOWING BOATS OF VISITORS AND PATIENTS

before she once more reached her harbor far away to the southward. Her small deck's space, crowded as usual with barrels and casks and fishing boats, suggested that if by any chance a sea came over it it would go hard with the ship and all aboard her. But there was something even more distressing to see about her; she was evidently "clean" betwixt decks—that is, she had "missed the fish," and the poor skipper was going home to face a winter in which little or nothing could be earned, yet having nothing to purchase a winter's food, and still less to devote to the many needs of his plucky little craft. If she was ill-fitted this year, what would she be next? What hopeless despair would be in my own heart if my lot in life were changed with this man's!

The little building ashore devoted to "meetin's" had been the labor of love of one or two poor fishermen who loved the Lord. It was built of chopped upright sticks, the chinks between had once been stogged with moss, and the rough hand-sawn boards that formed the roof had once been made water-tight with rinds of birch-bark. The floor had always been the native heath—that is, pebbles—and the seats

were narrow, unedged, chopped boards, seriously rickety for want of good nails. Death had claimed one of the builders; the other had gone to the "States."

Sunday was a really raw Labrador fall morning, cold, sunless and dispiriting. None of the craft sailed, and no work was done, as is our wont in Labrador, yet it did not look as if we could expect much of a gathering to "heartily rejoice in our salvation." But the skipper of the Firefly, strange as it may seem, upset all our calculations. For not only was he up betimes "getting a crowd," but his own exuberant joy in his salvation, showing out through his face—yes, and his very clothing—was so contagious that the meetings went with a will. Indeed, he brought God's Spirit, which quickens, with him into our very midst, an asset without which orthodoxies, ornate rituals and ceremonies are not only dead, but destructive.

Like the Master, he made the best of everything. He moved the topply seats so that they were steadied by the outside walls, and arranged the congregation on the weather side of the building, so that their broad backs might serve to block the drafts out from the chinks. He

apologized for remaining defects by saying that the holes above "will do to let 'em hear the singing in the harbor." After the evening service, as we walked down to our boats, I spoke to him of his poor luck with the fish. For if ever I felt sorry for a man, I felt sorry for him.

" 'Tis the Lord's will, Doctor," he replied. "I shall have enough for the winter, thank God." He meant dry flour enough not to starve.

The whole fleet got under way at daylight, for we were all anxious to get south. In the mission ship, soon after midday, we reached a harbor where we wished to see the settlers. The barometer had fallen a good deal during the day, and there was a lowering look about the sky and an ominous feeling in the air. So we put out two large anchors with a good wide spread, and buoyed them as well. For the harbor was none too good if the sea came in from the eastward, and already there was a sullen ground swell as if there was something behind the present light air. At sundown the little air had fallen to a flat calm, but the swell had increased, and the barometer fallen still lower. We knew we were in for a storm, so we gave sixty fathoms on each chain, and got out our big

kedge on the rocks with a hundred fathoms of good stout hawser to it. It was now almost dark, when we saw a small schooner being painfully towed into the harbor by some men in a row-boat. The calm before the storm had evidently left her helpless outside. At last she came in, and we heard them let go first her port and then her starboard anchor. Evidently her skipper was aware of what was threatening; we were glad to have a companion, anyhow.

Soon after midnight it began to rain, and then, with scarcely any warning, the wind struck us. Everything loose was instantly blown away, but as there was yet little sea, and we always kept an anchor watch so late in the year, we did not stir from our bunks, and soon, as far as I was concerned, I was fast asleep again. It was hardly daylight when I was next awakened, by men talking eagerly in the cabin. The motion of our ship told me at once that the sea had risen considerably, though we rode easily. The rain was falling in torrents or the flying spray falling on deck, one could not tell which.

"What's the matter, Joe?" I shouted. "Anything gone wrong?"

At my voice, he put his head in at my cabin

door. His oilskins were shining with water, and his hair was dripping also.

"The schooner ahead of us is drifting, Doctor. It's the one came in after us last night."

"Drifting! How's the wind?"

"Right into the harbor, Doctor. There is nothing but a watery grave for the crew if she goes ashore. The breakers are half-way up the cliffs."

It didn't take long to get into sea-boots and oilskins, and join the rest of the crew, who were on deck before me, watching the schooner.

"She's only riding to one anchor, Joe, isn't she?"

"Sure enough, sir. She must have parted her other cable in the night. She looks a poor little craft, and like any of them, I expect her holding gear is none too good."

We were sheltering under the weather cloth in the after rigging. It was still scarcely dawn, and the murky sky, over which endless clouds were scudding, looked cold and disheartening. The roar of the breakers against the cliffs behind us seemed to have a hungry sound, as if they were anticipating the death knell of the poor souls on the slowly drifting schooner.

"There are women aboard, aren't there, Joe?"

"Yes, sure," he said, "and children, too. It's a small freighter, bound home."

Even as we spoke we could see the deck getting more crowded, evidently with people coming up from the cabin.

"There's thirty or forty of them if there's a man, Doctor!" Joe shouted above the storm. "I guess they're going to try the boats if it comes to the worst. They might as well go down in the vessel. They'd never pull to windward in this wind."

Meanwhile the schooner was getting nearer to us, though as the wind blew then she would pass at least fifty yards to the south'ard of us. It grew a little lighter as we watched. The schooner was riding to the full scope of her chain, and seemed, like some live thing, to be making a desperate effort to save herself and the human souls she was responsible for. As the larger swells came along she would plunge almost bow under, and then rise and shake herself, as if to free herself of her enemy more completely before he struck her again. Casks and barrels and heterogeneous lumber of every sort had all been thrown overboard to free the decks, and were even now being pounded to atoms on

CREW OF MISSION STEAMSHIP STRATHCONA

the relentless rocks astern. It seemed only a matter of time before all on the devoted little schooner would share the same fate.

"Joe, that's the little schooner that lay near us last night?" I asked at last. "I'm sure that's her stern."

"It's the Firefly, as I live, Doctor. If the wind canted ever so little, we might pass them a line," he said, hoarsely. "We can only fail at worst. I'll be glad to make one in the boat to try."

"You'll do nothing with the life-boat, Joe. She's much too heavy. It must be the jolly-boat or nothing."

There was no time to be lost. Volunteers were plentiful for the four places in the boat. Who ever knew a deep-sea fisherman to hang back when life was to be saved? Fear? Yes, many have to go down before the ocean's might, but fear? They don't know what it means.

The boat was manned as much as possible under the shelter of our own hull, and a long, fine line coiled in the stern, to which we attached the end of our stout double-twisted wire hawser. A second line attached to the boat was to act as a life-line in case anything went wrong.

"God give you strength, boys," was all we could say as they stood to their oars, ready to make a dash to windward.

The crazy wind seemed to howl down with extra violence as the men bent to the oars, and a fierce sea, rising up, hurled the bow oar out of the rowlock, and drove the boat some precious yards astern. The tail of it, topping over the boat's rail, set the cox to bailing for all he was worth. Again the bow oar is shipped, and those herculean backs, toughened by years of contest with nature in her angry moods, are straining every sinew to hold their own. Now they would gain a little, now lose it again. Again an oar would be unshipped, and again the boat half filled with water. They were edging away to the south'ard, but making no headway. It soon became obvious that they couldn't get to windward. At best they could only hold their own, and if their strength failed, or an oar broke, it became a question if we should be able to get them back. If only the wind would cant a little, there was still a chance.

The men on the Firefly had seen the boat, and had at once taken in the situation. A small water-breaker was at once emptied, lashed to the end

of their log line, and flung over the side. The schooner was now nearly abeam of us, and riding not more than four hundred yards from the rocks behind her, that spelled death to every soul aboard her if she went ashore. Everything would be decided in a few seconds now. Even our lads couldn't stand the strain much longer. I think that, could we have read them, some of their thoughts were in little homes ashore just then. I know that I was thinking of wives and children—

> "For men must work and women must weep,
> And the sooner it's over the sooner to sleep."

But just then a wonderful thing happened. The empty cask was coming appreciably nearer to the boat. Were they making way? No, not an inch. They were still astern of our counter, which they had left, it seemed, ages ago. Surely it isn't a change of wind! Our wind-vane on the masthead hadn't budged an inch. No, it was just a flaw of wind on the water—a flaw, surely, just in the nick of time! Almost unable to speak for excitement, we saw that our boys in the boat had noticed it. We on the ship had time to pray as we watched them. What would we have given at that moment to have been able to lend a hand

in the boat! It must be now or never. They saw this also, and with one supreme effort our noble lads had seized the moment, and bent every ounce of strength to the oars.

If cheering could have been heard in the howling wind, we could have cheered ourselves speechless as we saw the bow man drop his oar, lean over, and heave the cask into the boat. In less than half a minute the line was detached, fastened to the line coiled in the stern, and the Firefly's men were hauling it in, while our boat still had her work cut out to make the ship once more. But soon we knew that the joy of saving the ship was to be ours. The wire hawser, carefully paid out, was soon through the Firefly's hawsepipe and fast around the mainmast itself. In less than a quarter of an hour she was riding behind our ship. True, her keel was only a few feet from the rocks as she rose and fell on the mountainous swell, but the line was trustworthy, and we ourselves were anchored sure and deep.

And so, when the storm was over, and our friends of the Firefly came on board, I don't know which of us was the most grateful, the saved or the saviours. It was only a pot of tea without sugar, and salt tub butter that graced

our humble table! It was only a crowd of men in coarse clothing, with sea-boots and blue guernseys in place of broadcloth and patent leathers, but I know that all our hearts, as we gathered around to thank the Giver of all good gifts, were full of a joy not to be purchased with dollars or found in any selfish indulgence this passing life can tempt us with. Nor hereafter will the "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," be for those who have been "saved as by fire," but for those who have used their talents to save others, and so have known the Saviour's joy.

"THAT BIT O' LINE"

"THAT BIT O' LINE"

"Heave her to, skipper, and tell Jim to throw the boat out, I'm going to board that steam trawler; I see she has her gear down."

This was to the skipper of the North Sea Mission vessel in which I was at the time working among the Deep Sea fishermen of the Dogger bank.

"She's going fast, Doctor; do you think we shall catch her?"

In my heart I hoped we wouldn't do so, for I was new to the work then, and I had always found it very difficult to know what to say and how to begin with complete strangers. Still I answered: "Run out the Bethel flag on the mizzen gaff; she'll come around then. She's a stranger to our fleet, I see."

"I think she joined us in the night; must have mistaken the light, I suppose. The Short Blue fleet passed through our weathermost vessels last night, and she's a Short Blue vessel." While he was speaking he had been hauling out the

broad tri-color Bethel flag to the gaff end. It usually signals to the fleet for service, but hung on the gaff end it means "want to speak to you." The strange trawler blew her whistle in answer and evidently put her helm over, for she commenced to make a circle round us as nearly as her great net, sweeping over the bottom, permitted her. I was still anxious about my reception, and wished it was anyone else who had to go, or that some one had a leg broken to give me an excuse.

"Who's the skipper of her, do you know?" I asked, handing the glasses to our captain.

"Can't say I do, Doctor; but him they call Fenin Jack had her once. It's the old Albatross —you know her, I'm sure."

"Well, if it's a stranger, all the more need to go to try and put in a word for the Master. Let's have two good hands in the boat; we shall need them in this lop."

The trouble in boarding a trawler at sea is that she cannot stop to allow you to come alongside, and it is always hard to go alongside a vessel that is under way, even in smooth water. However, it is a faint heart that never won, and no man can accuse a deep-sea fisherman of

that. We were soon aboard and the big-bodied and big-hearted fisherman on the bridge was shouting out: "What Cheer, Oh! Come up on the bridge. Mind the warp there. Go down below, you lads, and get a mug o' tea. You'll find the cook in the galley." He seemed so genial that I thought I should find it all the harder to speak to him of his need of Christ.

The grip the skipper gave me as I mounted the bridge left no doubt that there was a man behind the hand that gave it. Strangers though we were, we were soon good friends, for the skipper was a typical deep-sea man, with the absence of self-consciousness so delightful in men of the sea. Generosity, indeed, becomes almost a fault with them, and is often the cause of their being unable to say "No," just because "No" means hurting the feelings of some comrade who, perhaps, is asking them to enter a saloon. Unselfishness also becomes almost recklessness, when these men with wives and children go in search of forlorn hopes because "some poor devil is on his beam ends." When we had exhausted the subjects of the weather and the fish I ventured at last to ask my friend if it would be possible to have a little meeting in the cabin before we left.

"Maybe later on," he replied. "The watch is turned in at present. I guess they'll listen if you spin a yarn about anything except fish."

It didn't seem to me that my prayer for a word in season was being answered just then. Up to that moment I had not noticed any other man on deck except the helmsman. But now, chancing to look up, I saw a man sitting in a sling about half-way up the funnel, which he was leisurely chipping preparatory to repairing it. Our visits are necessarily so few and far between to the many fishing vessels, and, therefore, the opportunities so precious, that we generally try to get in a word or two with all the men, even if it is only that they may know us and feel that they have a friend in the mission vessel. This is not seldom the thing that brings a shy fisherman to pay his first visit to the ships or to our institutes ashore.

But on looking more closely at the man on the funnel I thought I noticed something familiar about him, more especially the head of red hair.

"That's never you, Dick, is it?" The red head turned around, and now I saw there could be no doubt about it. "Why, man alive, I thought you were drowned last New Year's."

"So did I, Doctor. And 'deed so I was, till the crew of the old Europa pumped the water out of me."

"Come and tell us a yarn as soon as you are through with the funnel. I'm mighty glad to see you in the fleet again."

The watch was roused at eight bells, and after Dick had enjoyed a scrub in a bucket on deck I followed him below. The steward had spread out for all of us some steaming bowls of tea, which seemed to have driven the thoughts of the promised yarn out of my friend's red head, till I broke in: "Come along, Dick, let's hear how it is you're still above water." At last, as if he had already nearly forgotten all about it, and when he had lighted his pipe to assist his memory, he began:

"It were last New Year's day, Doctor. We was in the old Sunbeam on the tail end o' the Dogger. The wind was in the nor'northeast, and there were a nasty top heaving along from overnight. 'Deed it was so bad the Admiral didn't show his flags for boarding."

Under our regulations if any loss of life occurred from throwing out a boat to try to transfer fish to the carrier, it meant a charge of man-

slaughter against the skipper of the vessel who sent his men. But the temptation to a skipper to do so is great, because the worse the weather and the fewer boats that send their fish to the market the higher will be the returns for those that do send. At the same time the young fellows are recklessly courageous and don't care to show the white feather when ordered to go in the little boat to ferry fish.

"Our skipper ordered the boat out, as we had a big haul, and me and Sam and Arch took her. It was pretty bad alongside the steamer among the other boats. She were shipping the lop over both rails as she rolled in the trough o' the sea I never saw such a crowd knocked off their pins by loose boxes, and rolled into the water in the scuppers in my life. Almost every one got a cold bath on deck before they were through with it. However, we got clear all right. It was snowing at the time and looked dirty to wind'ard, so we were for getting aboard again as soon as we could. I suppose we must have been a bit careless, now we were clear of that heavy lot o' fish. For I was just standing up shouting 'A happy New Year and many of 'em' to the Sunbeam's boat, when a curly sea caught us right under the

quarter and turned us clean upside down. I grabbed hold of something hard, and found myself holding on to the thwart. Only it was pitch dark. I was under the boat. There was air enough, as we had tipped over like a trap, but it were awful cold hanging in the water. I knew it weren't much good hanging on there, so I just grabbed the gunwale, and hauled myself outside. I had to go right under water for it, and I can't swim a stroke. But somehow I came up all right and caught the life-line which is rove through the keel, and I climbed on to the bottom.

"Archie was there already, but Sam had gone, and I guess he was dead by then. The driving spray kept us from seeing to windward, and that was the only way help could come. We were soon half dead with cold, for the old boat was level with the water and pretty nigh every sea went over us. Arch soon gave up and his head went down on the boat's bottom. I kept shouting to him, 'For God's sake keep up a little longer,' as I could see a smack shaking up into the wind ahead of us, and I guessed they had seen us and were getting out their boat.

"But just then an extra big sea came

along and washed us both off: me still holding on to Arch's oil frock. All I remember was striking out and finding something was holding me up. I had come up right through the life buoy ring. I'd hardly had time, however, to cough up some of the water I'd swallowed when I felt something tugging at me, and then it pulled me right under water again. I soon found what it was. The life buoy was fastened to the stern of the boat by a half-inch hemp line, and every time a sea came along the old boat sogged down under water and dragged me with it.

"Then it flashed across my mind what would happen. If I didn't cut that line and get loose the same sea that would bring the boat for me would find me under water, even if I wasn't drowned before that. I felt in my pocket for my fish knife—I couldn't have opened it if I had it. Indeed, I knew it wasn't there, for I could remember leaving it on the capstan after cleaning the fish. 'Deed, it seemed I could remember everything I ever did. Then I felt the tugging again, and down I went. It weren't the fault o' the life belt. It was just because I couldn't cut adrift; it were only just that bit o' line. All I could do was to get it in my

teeth when I could and chew at it. But it was no good; I couldn't cut adrift.

"Then I saw the boat coming. It got nearer and nearer. I could see some one leaning over the bow to grab me, and then I felt the tugging again, and down I went under water. It was just as I had thought. As I looked up through the water I saw the boat rush past over my head, and I knew, once it was to leeward, it could never get back to me. Then I lost consciousness. Of course, they went on and told every one I was lost. But I suppose the Lord hadn't done with me yet. For soon after, the steam carrier came along, and saw the boat, and then saw me still in the life buoy. They picked me up, and after a couple of hours rubbed life into me again. So here I am, you see." He stopped and sucked strenuously at his short clay pipe as if the telling had been an effort.

God's ways are not ours. Here in this unexpected way he had put into my mouth a subject that would be sure to interest the little company that gathered in the strange trawler's after-cabin. When the meal was over and the pipes alight again, while the cook-boy washed up the last remains of the meal, I produced my pocketful of

hymn-books and proposed to sing. With a ready response, such as sailors generally make to such a proposal, we launched out into "one with a chorus." The various members of the crew chimed in with the nearest tunes they knew, so that it was a cheerful noise together that ascended the hatchway. Owing to the vigor displayed it reached the man at the wheel, and even he couldn't resist joining in too as he steered the ship—

> "Why should I remain
> With ONE step between me and Jesus."

The life buoy and its lessons served as a subject all could understand. The life buoy hanging in the rigging warns us in finest weather to take heed—it is easily able to hold us in the deepest waters if we take hold. Yet we must trust to it entirely and get loose from every tie, however little, that binds us to perishing things, if we are to be safe. We must follow His footsteps who went to the Cross, and must have no reservations if we are to be useful. Though we cannot shake off the sins that tie and bind us, Christ is more than a mere life buoy, for He can, and is waiting to set us free if we ask Him.

"That Bit o' Line"

"What is binding you now, Dick? Will you ask Him to set you free?" For the tie, however small, that holds us to the world, spells death. The tie that binds us to Christ spells life here and hereafter.

LITTLE PRINCE POMIUK

LITTLE PRINCE POMIUK

"Whatever is that schooner bound south for at this time of year, skipper," I asked a fisherman who had just come aboard the mission ship with a "kink" (a sprain) in his back, as I looked up and saw a large, white-winged schooner bowling along to the south'ard with every inch of canvas spread to the spanking breeze that was blowing. "Her decks seem as crowded as if they were a Noah's Ark."

He looked at her for a long time, and then replied in his deliberate way: "I guess, Doctor, that this is the Yankee what's bin down north after some Huskies. What does they do with 'em, Doctor, when they get 'em?" he asked in a tone of voice that implied that they might be going to make them into sausages.

"Why, put them in a cage, like a lot of monkeys, and get people to pay ten cents a head to look at them," I replied. "They are going to the World's Fair, and it's very little good the poor souls will get there. The Brethren at

the Mission station have tried all they can to prevent their going, but they make such big promises that the poor creatures think they will never have to work again—and that's true partly, for many will never come back to Labrador."

"God keep 'em," he replied reverently.

The schooner soon disappeared over the horizon and with her vanished from our minds all thoughts of her unfortunate occupants.

The Eskimo encampment at the World's Fair was a popular sideshow. Sightseers of every sort crowded in to see the Eskimos from Labrador, just as they did the jumping elephants or the Ferris wheel.

Most popular among these poor creatures was a little boy—son of a chief from the north, ~~whose name was Kaiachououk~~; he was popular at the show for his merry, laughing manner, his striking dark face with the jet black hair, and the far-away, deep brown eyes. Active as a squirrel, rejoicing in the strength of youth that had been perfected by a life in close contact with nature, he would make the inclosure ring all over with the crack of his thirty-foot dog whip and the buoyant ring of his merry laughter. Many a nickel was thrown in that little Prince Pomiuk

might show his dexterity with the weapon that not a single grown man in all the crowd could wield. He could make the coin dance on the ground as his whirling lash fell on it from thirty feet away, with a loud crack that eclipsed the rifle shots from the shooting gallery hard by. It would seem that there was no more popular figure in all that vast exhibition than this child of the far north. There was certainly no one more light-hearted in all that throng than little Prince Pomiuk, of the Labrador Eskimos.

The shadow of the evil days to come had not yet fallen on that little life, and with boyish unconsciousness of all that the World's Fair city in summer was costing a constitution only acclimatized to the northern snow, no one was enjoying more than he all the fun of the Fair.

But among all the sightseers for whom these humble children of the great God were only as the attraction of a Roman holiday, was a man no longer young, a man who in the prime of life had given of his best years for the dwellers of those regions beyond from which the child had been lured by the promises that, alas! were never to be realized.

Though still young enough to enjoy the count-

less attractions and to appreciate the educational opportunities of the many exhibits from the ends of the earth, it was yet only a veritable call from the wild that had brought this one man all the long way here.

There were to be some children of the Labrador. God would permit him the joy once again of giving in his own person yet another message to them. For many years he had only been able to serve them as one of the Lord's remembrancers for them at his country home in New England.

Here where so many were seeking pleasure—amidst all that gay and apparently well satisfied throng, this was to be the sweetest joy of all, even there at the World's Fair—the joy of service. This is the joy which alone makes life itself a joyful thing. It alone illuminates with beauty the sick room of the lifelong invalid—where the gilding of fleeting pleasures has come off, and the heart has learned to understand that the satisfying of the soul of man is not in these things. But this joy is not always visible to the eyes that see only awful monotony in living among those poor creatures, though in bridge parties that recur like decimals, progressive eu-

chre evenings and retrogressive gossip they see no reason to weep over the waste of all the best assets of life.

Day after day this privileged man had the opportunity given him of visiting the Eskimos—day after day he reveled in the enjoyment of it—and as he realized that the love of these wanderers was going out to him, and through him to the Master whose business he was about—yes, and whose very presence he carried with him—his cup ran over daily with the realization of that glorified service in which he had enlisted. Especially did his love go out to the children—that was his Master's way, too—and he prayed, as those pray who are victors in prayer, that Pomiuk, the soul of them all, should share his own priceless treasure, the consciousness of a heavenly Father's love.

The good days for Pomiuk, however, went all too quickly, and one day his friend found him in one of the dark huts, lying on a bed of sickness. An injury to his thigh had ended by the insidious onset of disease of the hip joint, and the merry child had already commenced the living agony of the victim of tubercle.

A little later the Exhibition closed, and the

poor Eskimos commenced their long journey to their far-off northern home.

Alas! the promises of wealth and personal conduct home were never realized, and the remnant of them straggled back as best they could.

During the following winter the little party to which Pomiuk belonged was ice-bound on the northeast coast of Newfoundland. Here they passed a tolerable winter in a house kindly loaned them by a Christian postmaster. Pomiuk hobbled about on a pair of crutches and played with Evelina, a little girl born at the Exhibition.

But though lost to sight, this waif of the Northland still lived in the heart of his friend of the Exhibition. He sent after the boy on their errands of love letter after letter, till he heard that the ice of winter had once more gone—the sea was once more open to the plucky fishermen who ply their hazardous calling even among the eternal ice floes of Arctic seas.

On one of these adventurous craft little Pomiuk had once more begun his wanderings, and it appeared as if he had disappeared forever into the unknown. Letter after letter failed to reach him and brought back no answers from the silent north. It seemed indeed as if the Lord of the

children had forgotten this little one of His, and Mr. Martin was sad of heart.

Meanwhile Pomiuk had reached as far north as Ramah. His increasing sufferings had made it impossible for the band to take him farther that year. The good Brethren of that northern station had there done what they could to help him, and probably but for their kindness he would not have lived the winter through.

Meanwhile the new mission steamer which had met with such terrible disaster the previous year had been put in good repair once more. The long tow to St. John's had been safely managed by the skill and courage of the captain of the mission schooner, and in June of 1895 we again steamed out through the Narrows on our journey to the north. This year we determined, God helping us, to carry out our great desire to push as far north as the farthest family of white settlers, wherever that might be.

Late, therefore, in the summer we found ourselves off the entrance to that marvelous ravine in the vast mountains of the north named Naknak on the chart. Over the frowning cliffs there, two thousand feet high, hung heavy banks of sea fog, hiding their jagged peaks, and roofing

the weird opening as if it were the fearsome entrance to some grim ogre's cavern. Our lead found no bottom when we tried to sound it. There were breakers thundering on a hidden reef across the opening, and as these were not on the chart we were doubtful if this was really the entrance we were searching for.

However, by cautious pushing ahead we soon found ourselves between lofty naked walls, the tops hidden in wet fog, and so, pushing in, we at last saw light streaming in from above, and found ourselves, as it were, in an endless ravine, closed behind us by a great black gate. Cautiously we pushed in till it was already dark. Yet we had seen no light. We were now twenty miles in from the entrance, and uncertain what to do, for we were still unable to get bottom for an anchorage, and yet we might run ashore in the dark if we did not bring up.

At last, however, the watch sang out, "Light on the starboard bow." The night was still, and the sound of our steamer whistle echoed and re-echoed in endless cadences between the mighty cliffs.

Then three rifle shots rang out in answer, followed by a boat a little later bumping into our

quarter in the darkness, and a hearty Englishman jumped over our rail.

"Who on earth are you?" he asked, "and however did you get here? The mission ship, eh? I've heard of her from the captain of the Erik." The Erik was the steamer of the Hudson's Bay Fur Company, that comes once a year to take the catch of fur home to market, and this was George Ford, their agent, who, with his family, had for twenty years lived alone at the bottom of this terrible fjord.

During the evening, which we spent together, our friend told us that the Eskimos were all away hunting, but that one group were still farther up the fjord and had with them a dying boy.

It seemed almost like looking for a needle in a haystack to search for a tiny tent no bigger than one of the boulders that lay in thousands at the feet of those stupendous cliffs. But next morning we climbed a high promontory and searched the shores of the inlet carefully with our glasses. There it was, sure enough, nestling in near the mouth of a mighty torrent that was rushing headlong down the cliffs.

"Get out the jolly boat!" We now had our bearings of the tent, and were soon peeping into

the little skin "tubik," or tent, of an Eskimo family.

Sitting on a heap at one end of the tent, covered with deer skins, was an Eskimo woman with two tiny girls, while lying on the stones of the beach that served for a floor lay a naked boy of about eleven years, his long, jet black hair cut in a straight frieze across his forehead, his face drawn with pain and neglect, his large, deep, hazel eyes fixed wonderingly on us strangers. He didn't move, even when I spoke to him, for his hip was broken and diseased. A man called "Kupah" was the owner of the tent. The little boy was Pomiuk.

After the breaking up of the Exhibition he had never reached home again. While he was at the Fair his father, Kaiachououk, had been treacherously murdered by a man called Kallelizak. His mother had married again and was away across the mountains. She had taken with her the rest of the family.

"All we can do, Ford, is to take the child back with us. It would be kinder to give him a lethal draught than to leave him to suffer here. See what Kupah says to giving him to me for good."

Mr. Ford explained to Kupah that we were

POMIUK'S TENT

good medicine men, and wanted to make the child well; that he would be no use fishing, and indeed was only a hindrance now. As I watched him narrowly to see what fate awaited Pomiuk I saw him in the true Eskimo style shrug his shoulders and say "Ajauna mat," the equivalent of "It can't be helped," or "Do as you like."

Having put Pomiuk to sleep we carried him to Mr. Ford's house on an improvised stretcher. Here he was washed and dressed, and as we steamed south again the child, wrapped in a big white bearskin, was lying on the deck, following with his large pathetic eyes every movement of these strangers.

Only one treasured possession he had—besides his naked body—a letter we had received from the Hudson's Bay agent. It was addressed to Pomiuk and told of an old man in Andover, who loved and was praying for this lost sheep away in the mountains. It contained a photograph, and when I showed it to Pomiuk he said: "Me even love him."

A letter was sent to the address given, and three months later came back an answer.

As I looked at it I could see that tears of joy had fallen as the old man thought of the great

love of God that had so wondrously followed this little outcast.

"Keep him," it said. "Don't let him be lost again. I am only a poor man myself, but if you will keep the child we will pay. Only Pomiuk, for Christ's sake, must never know cold and loneliness again."

And so the children who formed the "corner" of a certain paper, and who had learned about Pomiuk at the World's Fair, became his little guardians, and said: "He belongs to us. We will take care of him."

As our steamer traveled south, visiting as she went, the heart of one of the brave Moravian missionaries, Brother Schmidt, was touched for our lonely child, and he gave him a little concertina to play with. This served to while away many a weary hour till at length Pomiuk could play several simple hymns. Among these was one he had learned at Ramah. It ran thus: "Takpanele, Takpanele, Merngotowikangilak," "Up in heaven, up in heaven, there shall be no sorrow there." He would sing it for us as his health improved, accompanying himself and ending always with his merry laughter when he noticed the men on deck were stopping to listen to him.

Little Prince Pomiuk

Out in the Atlantic, on an island, two hundred miles north of the Straits of Belle Isle, we had built one of our little mission hospitals. Here we left Pomiuk until in November we had to move him up the long bay. For only there are trees, which give some shelter from the terrible blizzards which make life on the outside islands impossible in winter.

During this winter the boy seemed so fully to have learned the story of our Saviour's love that he was baptized, and as a sign of his new life in Christ Jesus he received the name of Gabriel—the angel of comfort.

I had to go home to England that winter, but in spirit I was often in Labrador, so that mine was a joy that dollars could not buy when the child's joyful laughter greeted me once more, as he told me "Gabriel Pomiuk, me." He had hung out of his window a Red Cross flag, tied on the end of his crutch when he heard our ship was in the offing once more. He was just crying with joy when we came tramping up the stairway.

As a true Christian should always be, Pomiuk was happy all the day long, and the tenor of his letters to his far-off friends in America is expressed best in his frequent interpolations of "me

very laughing," till at last he wrote also, "Me walk with crutches now, me very glad." His affectionate little nature always made him end with "Aukshenai (good-bye) Mr. Martin, very much."

It was a lovely thing to see this stray child of the Northland blossom out into the simple Christian graces. He had many gifts sent him from American boys and girls. These he loved for their own sakes at first, and treasured closely. But soon he learned to love better the sharing of them with other cripple friends that from time to time found their way into the hospital. His busy fingers, too, put into models of dog sleighs and kajaks (canoes) the affection in his heart for all those who were kind to him.

But there was a greater love than ours for this child. One day came a letter from the hospital at Battle Harbor, where Pomiuk then was. It told how Pomiuk had been seized with a kind of fit and been kept in bed all the week, at times lapsing into unconsciousness. On Sunday night he asked for a verse of his favorite hymn:

> "Jesus bids us shine with a clear, pure light,
> Like a little candle burning in the night;
> In this world of darkness we must shine,
> You in your small corner, and I in mine."

ESKIMOS VISITING LITTLE PRINCE DOMINIK, WHO IS LYING DOWN

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

On Monday morning he went quietly home. The Doctor wrote:

"His unselfishness and amiable disposition made every one love him, and his memory will be fresh in many hearts for years to come. We must not be sorry for him. He has exchanged a life of feebleness for that full life beyond. The Lord Jesus was very real to him. Pomiuk loved to hear of Him as the Good Shepherd. Now He has taken him to Himself.

"I miss his happy, smiling face, and the hospital seems desolate. I sometimes wander up into the ward, only to remember he is no longer there. Tommy, our little paralyzed boy, will miss him most. They were such great friends. For ourselves we are sorry to lose such a happy lad; he was an example and comfort to all who came into the hospital. He endured patiently and bravely the limitations of a crippled life, and he enjoys his reward. Now he is gone, it must be our duty and joy to seek to brighten other clouded lives, and bring into their hearts the sunshine of our Saviour's love."

In a sheltered hollow in our tiny graveyard where others weary and worn had also been laid, rests the little body of this true Prince,

and on the resting-place his new name, by which he shall be known in heaven, Gabriel, which means God's man.

That night the mysterious aurora made bright the vault of heaven, its banners gleaming like the festal illuminations of some royal city. These simple children of the Northland call it "the spirits of the dead at play." But to the sad, yet faithful Christian eyes that looked upon it, it was the shining symbol of the joy in the city of God that yet another young soldier of Jesus Christ had won his way home to the palace of the King.

"THE COPPER STORE"

"THE COPPER STORE"

There could be no two minds about Tom Sparks. It was no trouble for him to work. His keen, active mind fired with energy his strong, well-built body. He was the true type of a Newfoundland fisherman. Medium height, broad-shouldered, with a frank open face betokening no little will power.

It was his greatest delight to be first on the fishing grounds, and he was ever the last to leave when a "spurt o' fish" was running. In the dark before dawn in our harbor, when the air is as sweet as sugar, and the silence almost unearthly, it used to be Tom's footfall on the rocks, and the sound of Tom stepping into his boat that heralded the activity of the coming day. Yet many a time you could see the tiny light twinkling away in Tom's fishing stage, as he finished splitting the last half quintal, when there was not another light in the harbor.

Tom was a "snapper fisherman," and if any boat in the harbor got a load it was as certain

as daylight that Tom's punt did not go home empty.

"I wants to get ahead, Doctor," he used to say. "And then, please God, I'll build a bigger boat, a schooner, maybe, one o' these days. No man can't be sure o' getting a winter's diet with only a cross-hand skiff to work in."

It was all the more surprising, therefore, that one day, when I was sitting in his little cottage, he should come in suddenly, throw his cap impatiently on to the settle, and, sitting down, bury his face in his hands.

"I ain't got a bit o' heart to work, wife," he said. "It don't seem to matter what yer catch is, yer get nothing for it. Them as gets none is just as well off as them that catches plenty. Why should 'em make us pay for what dey loses on others?" And I could see, in spite of his efforts to keep them back, the resentful tears standing on his cheeks.

"It's just slaving, dat's what it is, and seems to me the agents down here does just what 'em likes wi' us. There ain't nowheres else to get any supplies from, and they charges us credit prices to make up for them as don't pay. Even when you does settle you's account dey won't give you

no cash, and they 'tices you all they can to get more credit."

I could say nothing that would help, for I knew it to be too true. The truck system of trade always tells against the poor man, and when he is ignorant as well, it spells to him nothing better than slavery.

Now, Tom was always careful to "make" his fish well. He knew that it meant a deal of difference to the price that it was worth if it was white and hard, carefully cleaned and dried. So like everything else he went at, he spared no pains in the curing, and generally managed to pass it all as merchantable, which is the highest grade possible. On the present occasion he had just taken his fish to his merchant's store, and was very well satisfied with his success with it. In his mind he almost saw the bigger boat he had so long striven for. He saw himself seated in it, going out farther than ever, "right to the 'offer banks," and then coming home loaded, and the surprise and joy of his dear wife as he tied up to the stage, while he began to "pew" it up with the sharp hoe to where it could be split and salted. He was a man with an imaginative mind, and though he scarcely would have said so, he

saw also in his vision of those days a time when there would always be plenty to eat and drink, thank God, and unlimited warm clothing for wife and children.

So Tom had ferried his fish to the wharf, and thrown it down as the custom is. He was full of high hopes, as he watched it being culled, and speedily enough stored away. With not a little pride he had received from the storekeeper a ticket of the weight and quality of the fish. Then he went up the wooden gangway to the store above to get his account, and order his winter supplies. The storekeeper was very cordial and almost made Tom take more goods than he intended. For he had determined to be very "close" this winter, and to have enough left over for nails and iron work and canvas and rope to build the new boat.

But, like many of the fishermen, Tom had had no schooling, and was therefore quite unable to read. So when he met a friend outside, "who had a tidy bit of larning," he stopped him and asked him to read what was on the paper.

Poor Tom. He could scarcely believe that Levi Boyd was reading aright, as he laboriously spelled out: "You owes t' store fifty-five dollars."

FISH-STORE, LABRADOR

"Me owes t' store? You'm sure?"

"Why, certain, boy; 'tis writ plain enough." And then at the sight of the disconsolate face: "You wasn't expecting no balance coming to yer, was yer?"

Tom's heart was bursting with anger as Levi picked out for him some of the prices—and exorbitant enough they were. Salt was $3.00 a hogshead. Flour was $8.00 a barrel. Molasses was 80 cents a gallon, kerosene 30 cents a gallon, while his fish! Well, if the bottom had dropped out of the fish market Tom wouldn't have been more surprised.

Burning with indignation, he walked hurriedly back to the store, where he met the storekeeper, smiling as before.

"What's the matter, Tom, boy? Something gone wrong?"

For reply Tom took out the bill and pointed to the figures. "'Tis the prices, sir! Sure they be beyant all."

"They're only the usual prices. You can see for yourself if you like to look at our books."

"But the fish were every bit merchantable," he insisted, "and you only gives me credit for ten quintals o' merchantables."

"Come, come, I'm sorry if you're not satisfied; but the price of fish has fallen anyhow this last week. And I can't find out now if what you say is true, for your fish is all bulked along with the rest in the store. You're too late now."

What could the poor fellow do more? Might was enthroned. He couldn't get his fish back to prove his point, and so had to go home broken-hearted and leave things as they were.

"No, wife, it's no good. Us may as well take it easy like others do. Us only has to pay them's debts, if us works e'er a bit harder than others."

But she had seen discontent written in Tom's face before he began to speak, and like a true woman had already decided how best to counter it. "Come, Tom, ne'er mind, lad, dey won't allers have it all their own way. Dere's One above wot knows all about 'em, and he'll put t'ings right by'm bye. 'Tis no good for you's to fight again 'em. Dey's got everyt'ing in dey's own hands. Let's t'ank God we'm got enough for de winter."

"Yes, maid; but you knows I wanted to build our new boat dis winter, and den next spring I'd ha' caught two fish for one. But that's all over now," he added.

"N'ar mind, Tom, so as us lives. What odds about gettin' on? I suppose that's not for the likes o' we. Leastways, dat's what most dem t'inks, and I t'inks so, too, now. We'm better go on being content as we is."

After some time she got Tom quieted down, and his restless spirit that had been chafing under the undefined wrong done him (but of which he was quite conscious), was able to thank God for what was still left him.

We have had to say many times before, "God bless the optimism of the women." Before I left, the humble couple had knelt together at the Throne of Grace. They had asked Him who had seen the day's transactions to give them patience and grace to live honestly and to hasten the time when men should love others in deeds as well as in words. For, alas! alas! our storekeeper and our agent were called "Christian" men.

It was after a series of such experiences as these that we were in the house of one Baxter Webb, a fine, able-bodied, industrious fisherman. His wife, a good, thrifty woman, always cultivated a nice little potato patch while he was at the fishery. But this year it seemed as if everything was against them. One of our erratic summer

frosts had nipped the potatoes, and, in spite of all his efforts, Baxter's catch was small, and when he blurted out, "'Twas a poor summer, Doctor, and I don't know what we is agoin' to do for de winter," I could see there was some undercurrent of thought in his mind.

At last I guessed what the great question was. What should he do with the fish he had? Should he turn it in to the merchant who had fitted him out for the summer, or should he sell it privately and buy some food for the winter elsewhere? There was only seven quintals in all.

Husband and wife sat looking into the fire. The house was silent except for the breathing of the six children, four of whom were stretched out on the settle not yet undressed. The other two were in a rude kind of cradle in the corner of the little room.

Each knew what the other was thinking of, for their eyes, roving now and again to where the children lay, had met, been lowered, and had met again.

Baxter at length broke the silence. "What shall us do, wife? De children must have some-t'ing to eat. I knows the merchant can go without better nor we, and de fish won't pay more'n

half wo't we had; and he's not goin' to gi'e us any more, you bet."

"De Bible says, 'Pay what you owes and den trust God for de rest;' but it's hard to see de children starving."

"Well, maid, us wants to do de right. But it seems to me they allers gets their share out o' we anyways."

"Yet you know it says that He won't let one o' His children fall to the ground wit'out His knowing it."

"Well, well, I'll carry the fish down to M——. I'll tell him how we is off and ask him to gi'e us some t'ings for de winter. I can't do fairer nor dat, and den if he don't, why we must just trust de Lord to feed us, dat's all."

So on the morrow he put it all in his boat and carried it to the agent. Promptly he accepted it on account, and even praised poor Baxter for his honesty in bringing all that he had. But when, at length, Baxter stammered out: "It's all we has for de winter," the agent simply said, "I'm sorry to hear that, for there is still a balance against you upon our books. I'm afraid you'll have to do the best you can." And then he turned away to speak to another man.

Poor Baxter. He could no more ask for mercy from this man than he could from the big seas that he so often faced with a lighter heart than he now turned homeward to greet his wife with.

His good wife, who had anticipated the result, met him with the most cheerful smiles. "I see you has got nothin', boy. But dere, n'ar mind. We has a few potatoes, anyhow, and maybe God'll send somet'ing along."

God did send something along, in the form of devoted brotherly neighbors, or Baxter and his wife and family would not now be living to tell the tale, for it was a winter of sore trial. The long fall prevented any chance of remunerative labor, and the deep snow made work in the woods impossible. By Christmas the little stock of butter and molasses was exhausted, and for some time Baxter and his wife had been on very short allowances of flour. At length even that was gone, and nothing but a few potatoes and some salt herring remained. Even Baxter's strong nature couldn't stand it long. He got thinner and thinner, and eventually fell seriously ill.

The simple, kindly neighbors soon found out the cause of Baxter's illness; though till then he had concealed it from them, for they were nearly

A NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE IN WINTER

as badly off in the matter of provisions as he was himself.

But now they clubbed together, and by a panful from this house and a panful from that, two barrels of flour were collected and brought to the humble family. The children could scarcely understand the need of so much generosity. For all the time the parents had been starving themselves the children had never been allowed to want, even though it was only flour. By the time Baxter was nursed back to his strength, it was possible to get to work in the woods, and in a fortnight, by steady, hard work, he had brought out enough logs to pay for his two barrels of flour, for he was determined not to be unnecessarily indebted to the others. At length the spring days brought a little work incident to the return of the fishery, and so also a little more food and comfort into the home. The long, dreary winter, full of trial, hardship and the truest heroism, was at an end. Yet all it seemed to leave in the mind of this devoted couple was the sweet memory that "de children never wanted all winter, t'ank God."

Soon after this a meeting of the fishermen was held in our harbor and, of course, as it was

strictly private, it soon leaked out that the subject was the formation of a co-operative store.

I was not surprised, therefore, a day or two later to be asked: "Is dat true, Doctor, that you'se be goin' t' start a copper store? I doesn't understand what dat be."

It was, indeed, a long business explaining to these men, born and reared on the truck system, that any other way to live was possible. They could not stretch their minds to imagine a cash basis of trading.

Old Uncle Ephraim, who was alleged to have "a stocking full o' t'ings somewheres," rose in the meeting to ask: "Where'll us get salt from in t' spring?"

"Why, buy it at the store, of course."

"You doesn't mean pay cash for salt, does you?"

"At this store things must be paid for in cash."

The old man simply collapsed with a woebegone expression on his face.

Then Uncle Alfred, another of our village savants, arose and wanted to know, "What'll us do if it be a bad fishery, Doctor? Where'll us get a winter's diet?"

"The traders don't give you food or salt for

nothing; they don't run a charity," was the answer.

"You really pay for all you have. Only you pay a great deal more, because you pay credit prices, and now the man who does well pays for the man who does badly. But you can see from the number of traders there are that everything is paid for and we really do earn enough to live on."

My friends are not talkers, and it was difficult to get them on their legs at all; but the burden of the next speech was understood to be: "Us reckons t' Gov'ment'll have to stand t' it."

Another wiseacre chimed in that he didn't see what the Government was for, if it wasn't to keep poor people from starving. The Government has all along been looked upon as a kind of inexhaustible supply intended to send along unlimited barrels of flour, whenever the traders would not give a man a winter's diet, and often enough, also, to pay the traders when they had given it.

The only answer possible to these remarks was: "If people cannot earn enough to live on, then they must get out and try and live somewhere else."

One man, though he would have done anything to get clear of the traders, being a doubtful soul, suggested, "You says the copper store won't give us no credit in the fall; but perhaps the traders may give us," the deduction being the old system is best.

The crucial point was arrived at when old Skipper Matt, who had been an over-sea sailor in his day, and "knowed a thing or two," asked, "If salt is one dollar a hogshead in St. John's, will the store charge $2.40 for it?" When there seemed to be a prospect of reducing the prices at present in vogue all hands voted for the "copper store."

So the end of it was the formation of the "White Bay Co-operative Store," with thirteen members, who were unitedly able to allow $85.00 in cash for the capital. Naturally enough, we had to invite some outside shareholders, and this we of the Mission arranged. In the fall the first consignment of goods was sent down. I have a copy of that first order now before me as I write. To me it is a precious, though a humble, document. We could not afford a large stock, so we asked Uncle Alfred how much he would expect to pay for with fish that he could honestly call his

own, and was not owing to the trader. This we added to the amount that Uncle Ephraim would need, and so to Skipper Tom's and the others. Alas! some already owed all they had and more besides. So these could not begin with the co-operative store till next year, though they all said they would live on grass in the spring to avoid having to incur debts on credit. And I verily believe some of them did. At length, when the list was completed we found we could purchase still a small stock to have on hand, which those who catch fur in the winter, and so get money, could purchase from.

We had next to arrange for some means of getting the co-operative fish to the market. This was not easy, as naturally the traders, who had carried it for us before, could scarcely be expected to freight for us now. We arranged to pay our bills by checks, the three members who wrote best each signing their names on them, like a proper finance committee. This system, however, we abandoned later, as it was a great labor, few though the checks were. And, moreover, when the three names were accomplished they had strayed all over the check till the amount was almost illegible. So we appointed an

agent in St. John's instead, who helped us also by keeping our accounts for us.

Next spring came the crisis with the traders. No one who had joined the store could get supplies from them, and some could not afford yet to buy for cash. None wished it known, therefore, who the shareholders were, and every man who put in a share had his name in blank and a number issued instead on his paper. The goods were stored in an old house lent for the occasion, and there was no external sign of the store at all. However, that, too, was soon to be changed, for as soon as we began to see our way a bit clear we painted up all across the house, "White Bay Co-operative Store."

In order to get a photograph of the first Labrador co-operators we had to get a group of all the able-bodied men together, so that the real members were not recognizable. One man had to be known visibly as the manager. And for that post we chose a promising young fisherman who could write. He kept the store open only when it was necessary, spending the rest of his time fishing like the others.

Many are the adventures the store met with in its career. Its misfortunes were largely due to

our lack of wisdom. But we have slowly remedied this in the school of experience.

Now ten years have rolled away since first the store started. A fine schooner of our own, the Co-operator, has been added to bring down our goods and take our fish to the market. Slowly, but steadily, the store has grown in strength. The men have grown in independence. The church, the school and the houses have grown in efficiency and comfort. There is not a man now in our harbor but has a dollar to his name, and a dollar in the store as well. Half-clad and half-naked children have almost entirely disappeared. Moreover, three or four other little stores have grown up along the shore, and may almost be called its babies. They are small, it is true, but texts are small things, and these are preaching a valuable sermon, especially with regard to the price of goods.

It was only a day or so ago that Uncle Alfred confided to me: "If ever the store goes down, Doctor, we'll all have to leave White Bay."

In the course of time Uncle Ephraim has had a stroke. His years are long ago lost in the long tale of decades. I went into his cottage a while ago, after a winter's absence, and found him

propped up by the fire in his old home-made arm-chair.

"Well, Uncle Ephraim, how goes the world with you?" I asked.

"I am half alive yet, thank God," he answered with a bright smile.

"Are you sorry your time with us is nearly run out?"

"No, no, Doctor, not sorry, thank God. The Lord have 'lowed me to see good times—and some hard times, too, praise His name. But at the end He have let me see this here copper store, which have given many of we folk a chance we never 'lowed we should live to see come to White Bay again."

The gospel, as we interpret it in relation to the economics of the fishermen, has taken the form of industrial work of various kinds. We do not think it is merely the serving of tables.

THE PREACHER

THE PREACHER

It was the second week in June before we were able to leave St. John's for our summer's work. Our little steamer had been late in shaking off the bonds of winter and getting out of her cradle of ice. At last the southerly wind had brought some warmer weather—the deep snow on the ice had melted off and we had been able to saw round the ship with the huge pit-saws, and to cut a channel for her to open water. Then the westerly winds, marking the advent of our summer, had driven the great ice fields off the coast and we, prisoners of the iron frost of the north, had become free again.

At one of the harbors, among the many who had come aboard for medicine, for news from the south, for advice or help, or merely to give us welcome, was one man who wanted a passage to his home in the north. He was a man well known and loved all along our northern coast. He had come south on a mission trip and was now returning to be ready for the great rush of

the fish when they first strike the land. With the advent of winter the cod seek the deep water, where the temperature does not vary so greatly with the seasons, and again, as the water gets warmer in spring, when the smaller fish swarm to the landwash to spawn, these great, huge-mouthed, hungry fish come rushing in in countless thousands, so that even the surface of the sea is alive at times as far as one can see. This is the fisherman's harvest, and it behooves everyone to be ready when the time arrives, for in a day then a man can catch as much as in a month at other times.

But our new friend was not only a fisher of fish, seeking for the catch that perish in the catching. Living on a lonely, isolated coast, where there is no regular ministry, he had felt the need in his soul for the gathering together for prayer and mutual encouragement in the Christian life; and so, in the slacker seasons, as he could he would make time from the duties of his home and journey alone along the coast for long distances, assembling his fisher brethren where they would join him, that they might rejoice in the sure and lively hope of something better than the poor life they could at best expect here be-

low. To enjoy the fellowship and help which comes of common service, he had sought and obtained a lay reader's license of the Episcopal Church, and his visits were keenly looked for by the poor folk of his extended parish.

A cheerful companion he was, as we journeyed north together, brimming over with stories of his own experiences, as men of the sea will, whose memories for details have not been swamped with the reading of endless papers and magazines.

"I had a terrible experience here once," he said, as we passed a tiny cove, which, though open to the Atlantic, afforded shelter enough to allow two or three families to keep boats there, which they hauled up high out of reach of the sea on rudely constructed slipways every time they came home from fishing. As we passed we could see the poor-looking wood houses perched on high props to make level space enough to spread even their small floors on. The naked cliffs above seemed determined to shoulder humanity into the sea, and these homes of men, equally determined, seemed to be clinging to their feet like limpets.

"What was the experience you had?" I asked. "It doesn't look like a place for excitement."

"Well, I had to try and comfort two poor souls who were nearly beside themselves," he said. "They were only poor folk, as you can guess any would be who lived here; but they had three dear little children, and they lived up there on the north side of the cove. It was just about this time of year and the fish was in in plenty, so that they had the stage loaded waiting to be split and salted—and you know there's no time to be lost, Doctor, if we are to make good fish, once it's ashore. John, of course, wanted to go out again as soon as possible for more fish, while it was still to be had near the land. So he and his wife went down early into the stage to finish off. The three children, who were almost babes, were left in the house in bed. It so happened that their house was hidden by the rocks from their stage. It seems they didn't hear or see anything odd till after they were all through with the fish. When at last they went back to where the house had been, it was all gone—only a few smoking ashes were left and a few charred remains. Three as fine babies as ever you saw, Doctor—all gone —and everything else that belonged to them—not a stick left. Yes, it was a hard thing to make them feel that God did really love them—a terri-

ble experience. You see they hadn't been ready to let the children go—that was the trouble, Doctor—no, not even if God Himself wanted them."

He was a strong man, this modern fisherman disciple—his fine figure developed and hardened by years of battling with elements which permit no weakling powers to wrest a living from their reluctant grasp; his face, seamed and bronzed with exposure to sea and frost, yet shone with that beauty of love for his fellows, with which artists of all ages have tried to illuminate their pictures of our Saviour. It was the brave, strong soul within the man that made it a privilege to have his company, as we carried him north to his home again from yet one more of his unassuming ministries of mercy. Off the harbor that he lived in we stopped our vessel, while he once more clambered down into his little boat, that we had been towing behind us. There was a sense of true brotherhood that ran through one's very heart as we shook hands over the rail. After the rope was let go, as I watched him pulling in towards those forbidding cliffs, now rising on the crest of the great Atlantic swell and now again disappearing from view, all unconscious of the true hero's part he was playing, my

thoughts wandered unconsciously back to Him who once loved so much to go about doing good among just such humble fishermen, in just that unpretentious way, He also all forgetful of Himself, and I wondered, What is the best that life has to offer? Is it not to be won only through sacrifice?

* * *

Once more the season had gone by. In the mission ship we had visited as far north again as the lonely beach on which we had once found our little Eskimo child. We had seen much sorrow, as well as much joy, and had been grateful for many opportunities for commending the Master's service in many ways. But now the advent of the early snows of winter, and the ice forming in the more quiet inlets had driven the fishing vessels south once more. Lingering to say a last good-bye to our fellow-workers, who were soon to be frozen in and shut off from us for at least seven months, the mission ship was now the "keel of the Labrador," the last to leave it.

Our last point of departure was to be a place called Red Bay, where we were fostering a small co-operative store, to fight the villainous truck

system that was impoverishing our fisherfolk and destroying their independence. As we lay in the harbor chatting with many friends whose boats had been alongside almost before our chains had done running through the hawse pipes, one fisherman, producing a soiled piece of paper from his pocket, asked me, "Can you make head or tail out of that, Doctor?" It was a piece of a letter which had evidently been wet, and the ink was smeared over the page, so that it was impossible to decipher it.

"No, George, I can't—nor any one else, either, I should say. Why, where did you get it?"

"Well, Doctor, two days ago I was down after my nets at Green Cove, and I thought I saw a boat against the cliffs, just inside the point. It had its mast up, and the sail was flapping loose in a queer sort o' way, so I thought I would go over and see if anything was the matter. It was calm at the time, and the boat was just bumping against the rocks.

"When I got near, I found there was no one in the boat, and that the painter was hanging loose over the side. You can guess I was a little scared, for when I started to haul in the slack of the rope I found it was fast to a man's leg;

just by a loose turn, however, that was all. I hauled the poor fellow up on to the rocks, and would you believe it, the body was quite warm, so I turned to and tried if I could revive him any; but it was all no good, he was dead enough—but he hadn't been dead long, that I'm certain of. He was a stranger to all o' we. I reckon he must have come from the other side," jerking his finger towards the far-off shore on the other side of the Straits of Belle Isle. "He must have been drifted off somehow, for we've had southerly winds these three days—but it's only been a capful, and nothing to blow any man off anywheres. That paper was in his pocket. A trader's vessel was in here yesterday and he said he reckoned he must be from t'other side, so he took the corpse over to Kirpon, where he was bound next."

It seemed an odd story, but odd things happen every day at sea, and so I gave back the paper and forgot the incident in the routine of work.

A few days later we crossed the straits and ran into a harbor on the lonely shore near Cape Norman lighthouse.

As I sat talking to a man who had just come off with a gift of fresh fish for us, somehow the

conversation drifted to the subject of the poor fellow whose body had been found on the Labrador side.

"You don't happen to know of any one who has been missing from over here, do you?" I asked quite unconsciously.

He looked at me curiously for a while, as if he was puzzled at something in what I had said, and then, apparently satisfied, answered: "Yes, I does, Doctor; I knowed him well."

"Oh, you've heard then of his being picked up in Labrador, I suppose? Who was it, and how did he get over there?"

I could see it cost him a good deal to say anything, and, thinking it might be a near relative, I added: "Never mind, Andrew. Tell me another time. Let's go ashore and see the baby."

"No, Doctor," he said. "It isn't that," reading my thoughts in my eyes. "'Tis worse than that. 'Tis the preacher, and I might have saved him."

"Never, Andrew! You don't mean the man I brought down this spring?"

For reply he merely nodded.

"Why, how ever did it happen? What could have brought him over there?"

"He were down here after the last spurt of

fish were over, holding prayers. By hisself, in his boat, as usual. He were in a hurry to be home, as 'tis always busy that time o' year. Certain t'were getting lateish to be about alone, but, seeing it was he, and he so accustomed to it, no one thought there were any likelihood o' trouble. Well, he went off all right about midday, but about sundown Phil and I saw the boat about a mile out lying head to wind. Phil said: 'What's the preacher at now out there this time o' night?' 'Trying a line I suppose,' I answered. I didn't think then of there being anything wrong, though the boat certainly was drifting up with the current. Well, just again at dark Phil and I took a stroll up on the head, just to look out, you know. It was a beautiful warm night, with a little southerly air, and the sea was calm enough. 'Isn't that the preacher's boat out there?' Phil said. 'She's drifted a long way. I guess the preacher must be having a nap.' 'I suppose,' said I, and then we both went down and turned in. We didn't think there were any danger, you see.

"I was worried a bit that night, and once or twice a feeling came over me that I ought to have gone out to help the preacher. Perhaps he was

in danger. But it was too late then. Well, Doctor, you know how I felt when I heard what that trader had brought over, and then I thought o' his wife and all those children. I tell you, Doctor, there are some things a man will never get out of his head. I know I never thought there were any danger. I'd have given anything and gone anywheres—yes, anywheres—to save that man's life. But, you see, I never thought, Doctor; I never thought, and now 'tis too late."

The anguish of the poor fellow's very soul rang out in the words, "I never thought. 'Tis too late now."

Then came into my mind some words spoken so long ago, yet the burden of which so many have still to learn:

"When saw we Thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?" . . . "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me."

As I looked at the humble tribute of fresh fish now lying on the deck I searched keenly also the face of the man who had brought them. He was the father of children. He had still opportunities of other service much needed on that

coast. Had God permitted his servant to teach by his death a much needed lesson, and to save this soul? And if so, should we who know Christ's way of saving the world, consider the cost too great wherever it calls us? How is it with us in our lives? Are we seizing life's opportunities, or is the cost too great?

WHEN WE LET OUR PILOT GO

WHEN WE LET OUR PILOT GO

It was late in the month of February, when, on one of our long winter journeys with the dogs, we had been resting a few days in a small settlement of some forty families. We had seen those who were sick, among whom was a girl on whom an operation had been necessary to relieve her of much suffering. But now all were doing well.

One poor fellow, who some years previously had badly crushed his knee, and had not been treated for it, had fallen into great poverty, and his four naked children had been clothed, and not a few others had been helped in the same way. For gifts of clothing given for our poor are kept against the terrible winter months.

Each night we had gathered together for worship in the tiny house set apart for that purpose, and in this way not a few had been encouraged and comforted.

It was time to move on. Our dogs were well rested after their long journeys of the previous

week. We ourselves were anxious enough to push ahead, and to get back to our little hospital and to the friends and patients awaiting us there. But a "mild" or "warm flaw" in the weather had set in, and it was impossible to travel till it froze once more. At night, however, to our great joy, the stars shone out brightly, and a fall of many degrees in temperature sent us all inspanning before daylight, and away with the first streak of dawn.

The first few miles were glorious indeed. The surface of the bay ice was like glass, and the dogs went so fast there was no chance even to get off for a run on the snow, to stir one's blood and keep from freezing.

As we neared the open sea, however, we found that a heavy sea, accompanying the easterly wind and mild, had broken the smoother ice into great sheets, and that the constant swell had kept it from annealing again in the night. We were constantly passing over gaps many inches wide, leaving open water visible. But our long, rakish dog sleigh, or komatik, navigated them all successfully.

At length, having crossed the bay, we reached a perpendicular wall or cliff, which it

was necessary to ascend, for the sea ice beyond had been pounded into porridge. Skirting along, we came to where in summer a stream ran out from a large lake above. It had worn back the cliff a little, so here we tried to mount. A weary task we found it, for it was now covered with deep, ice-coated snow, and for every one step we went ahead we slipped back two! With snow-shoes on standing was impossible; without snow-shoes every other minute one broke through the crust and floundered up to one's armpits in snow beneath. The dogs could get no foothold, either, and it looked as if we could not advance farther and must turn back. We had, however, brought with us a trusty pilot, one who had trodden this path before, and he volunteered to go ahead.

"All right, Ned, if you can go, we can follow, that's certain!" Soon he was at work, cutting with his axe footsteps in the crust of ice. Then he would stamp them down, and if the snow gave badly, beat them with the flat side of the axe till he formed a solid shoulder of snow. Meanwhile we just waited patiently down below. Slowly and toilsomely he began to ascend, at times seeming to make no progress. But even as we watched he climbed higher and higher, our

confidence rising with his. It seemed easier as he came nearer the top, and as the main difficulty was left behind. At last he stood on the brow and shouted down to us to follow in his footsteps. He had taken up with him our long coil of fine rope, and this he now lowered to us, so that not only did his footsteps help us to rise, but the line he held kept us from slipping back with our heavy komatik. Even the dogs were quite clever enough to recognize the value of the footsteps, and, encouraged by his calling from above, they succeeded in struggling upward. I was the last to mount, steering the sleigh. But now the repeated pressure of the dogs' feet had made "clever," hard-beaten holes, which helped me upward like the rungs of some ladder.

Once at the top, we struck away across a fairly level plateau through the trees. The trail seemed well marked, and we knew the general direction. So we let our pilot go. At first we rattled along at a great pace, and were soon a mile or more on our way. Then the trees grew thicker, and we had to halt now and again to make sure we were on the path. The blazings on the trees became harder to recognize as the melted snow from the recent mild had

frozen over them and hid many completely. The traces on the trail also became confusing, and only after much disentangling from trees did we at length run out on to a long marsh leading down to a wide lake, frozen over and deep under snow, and as trackless as the Sahara. Thick woods again faced us beyond the lake, and a valuable hour was lost in vain search for any marks that would tell us where we ought to enter this forest. Now we were sorry we had let the pilot go, and, being anxious to push on, we redoubled our efforts. The "glitter," however, most effectually concealed the blazings, and we were at last driven to try to force a way of our own. But the attempts ended each time in a thicket that no dog team could penetrate, and each time we had to come back again as far as our long marsh, and face the same inextricable tangle of virgin timber growth.

"Never mind, Rube," I said to the driver. "It's only ten miles out. We will have a good lunch here, and then you can drive the dogs back and come on with the pilot to-morrow. I'll walk through with Deane to the harbor."

So after "boiling the kettle," Deane and I set out "light," expecting to reach our harbor with

ease in a couple of hours. But we were reckoning without our host. Hour after hour went by. On and on we wandered, now up to the top of a hill to get a view, after painfully struggling with the deep, soft snow among the trees, now taking off our rackets and climbing an icy tree to see if we could tell where we were. All snow-clad hilltops seemed alike, every frozen lake and rivulet seemed to curve away from our direction. Drogues of thick wood, trackless wastes of barren, wearisome climbs and neck-breaking descents, always just anticipating success, always it seemed doomed to failure. We were out of the track, and no help was to be had anywhere. At length, worn out, we cut down a thick spruce and tried to light a fire, while we lay down and rested our weary limbs. But the ice would not let us make a fire, no dry wood being discoverable in the dark. The frozen boughs of the bed we made only helped to freeze further the moisture in our clothing, caused by the violent exercise we had been taking. We had finished our food before dark. I had never faced a night with such misgivings as to what its issue for us might be. Getting to the harbor for us seemed hopeless. But as it was impossible to rest

we had no alternative but to get up and wander on.

Suddenly my comrade shouted out. "What is it?" I answered; "What have you found?"

"Footsteps," he said. "Some one's racket tracks."

"Which way are they leading?"

He struck a match and looked at our pocket compass. "North by east," he said; "that should be our direction."

"Do you think we can follow them?" I asked.

"We can try anyhow," he replied.

You can imagine how carefully we followed those tracks. Now feeling for them with ungloved hands, as we passed through the darker places, now and again being even forced to light another tiny match. Slowly, painfully, carefully, we followed on and on.

"We are descending to the sea, it seems," I thought, for the descent was now very rapid, and we more than once fell, our large snow-shoes catching on partly covered stumps or rocks. Once we walked straight into a wall of snow. In the dark it looked like an opening in the wood. Many times we had to feel our way, with eyes tightly closed, for the

projecting boughs stuck into our faces before we saw them. At last we were on the level. The rough "ballicater" ice by the sea edge warned us of our position. We had descended a gully to the landwash at the foot of the cliffs. There was no passage either way. We had been unconsciously following a trapper's footsteps on his wanderings. Another match and the compass proved it beyond a doubt.

There was nothing for it but to climb the cliff again. Here was perhaps the only time courage was needful. To retrace is always harder, to say: "I will try yet once more."

"No time to be lost," shouted my comrade. "Let's face it again while we have the chance. It may go hard with us if we delay."

It seemed hopeless, I must confess. One was tempted to waste time in vain regrets and to think hard thoughts of the man who led us out of the way. Yet had he known it he would certainly have regretted it as much as we did.

Just at that moment came the needed spur to a fresh attempt—a sudden shout ahead.

"A light! a light!"

"Where? Where?"

"Right over the ice below us."

"Why, that's the bay, and I guess I know the way now."

He had already mounted part of the hill again, and from that point was able to see across. We had somehow missed the light going down. It had been there, of course, but we had blindly passed it by.

It proved afterward to be only the tiny light of a humble fisherman's cottage, out on the point where no others are living. But it was a shining light, and just for these very reasons was the only one visible around the cliffs.

"Thank God for it," we said.

With fresh zeal we plied again our rackets and wearied limbs, and were hardly once more on the top when my comrade cried out:

"Another set of footsteps. Going the right way this time. I am sure of it."

After our recent experience we kept repeatedly watching the compass. That at least was correct always. Surely we were on a path to where we could get some shelter.

On and on we went. How far it seemed to us may be judged by the fact that it was already nearly midnight, and darkness had set in about four o'clock.

Suddenly another shout from ahead: "Komatik tracks; fresh, too," and then I saw my comrade strike yet another precious match to examine a tall stem by the wayside.

"Blazed," he shouted, "we are on the right track this time."

And so it proved. For the clouds above broke soon after we emerged from the wood on the high land above, and there below us, with a straight lead home, were the village lights—with the tiny one that had been our salvation twinkling away far out in the darkness near the head.

As we spread our sleeping bags on the floor of the humble hut we had selected to put up in we said: "Surely to-day's experiences have been a parable from life."

"REPORTED LOST"

"REPORTED LOST"

The Atlantic coast of Labrador stretches from north to south almost six hundred miles. It is swept along its whole length by the frigid waters of the Arctic current. It is shut in for seven months out of twelve by the relentless rigors of winter. Not till June is it possible to penetrate the ice fields that fend off all intending visitors. The days of its brief summer are short to the plucky fishermen who work their way north in pursuit of the great shoals of cod. These fish are distinctly influenced in their movements by the changing temperatures of the water. As winter approaches they retreat into the deeper waters, where it is supposed that they lie more or less torpid during the winter months. With the advent of spring they again approach the shore, "striking the land" first to the south, and then farther and farther north. The movements of the fishing fleets depend on those of King Cod, so that from July to October the great bulk of fishermen are away north of the Straits of

Belle Isle, and so also far from our little hospital at Battle Harbor.

We decided, therefore, to build a second small mission hospital, two hundred miles farther north, and we chose Indian Island as the center of a large group of summer fishing stations. When the winter sets in, all the fisherfolk from this region pack up and go south again, and those in charge of this hospital do likewise.

It was late in October, and the snow was over the land once more, and ice in all the bays. In our mission steamer we were bound out of the great fjord known as Hamilton Inlet. It was getting dark and we were still twenty miles from the entrance, when the watch called out, "There is a small boat laying off, Doctor, and waving a flag for us."

"Slow down, then, and let's see what they want."

Soon a boat with four hands was alongside. "Can you carry us to where we can get the mail boat, Captain?" a tall fellow called out; "We've lost our vessel on White Island reef, and we've no way to get back."

"Very well, get aboard; but what vessel is it?"

"The S. S. Sparrow, from Rodney Harbor, belonging to Captain Flowers."

"Oh, the Sparrow, is it? Where did you say you ran her ashore?"

"On White Island reef."

"Did she sink at once?"

"No, we had time to beach her; but she's full of water, and we've been living under a sail waiting for the last mail boat from the north to take us off. But it's terrible cold and there's no firewood."

"Has Captain Flowers gone south?"

"Well, no, sir; he's waiting for the mail boat also."

"All right, go down aft and get some tea. The hospital is full aboard, so you'll have to sleep where you can—engine-room floor, I guess. Haul their boat aboard there and lash it in board. Tell the chief not to fire any more. We shall anchor shortly for the night."

Our visitors appeared to be uneasy as they saw us head off for the White Island and gradually draw in toward the reef. And when at length we had cautiously hauled in to four fathoms of water and let our anchor down, the spokesman came to me and asked me: "What are you going to do?"

"Wait till daylight and survey the wreck," I

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replied. We could now plainly see the wreck lying on her beam ends.

A little later he came again and said: "We want to go aboard the Sparrow, Captain, if you'll let us, now we're so close."

"Sorry we can't allow it," I answered; "the anchor watch will see that no one goes off the ship till I do." Judge of my surprise to be roused in the morning by the sound of oars, and to find that our four friends had already thrown their boat out again to leave for the wreck. Our boat was, however, in time to send them aboard again, at which they grumbled greatly.

The fact was that Captain Flowers was the keeper of a saloon that had given rise to much trouble, and we had reasons to suspect, knowing the coast so well, that the Sparrow had been purposely cast away for the sake of the insurance on her. A cursory inspection confirmed our suspicions, so we steamed on down to the hospital, landed our sick and the shipwrecked crew, took aboard a few useful implements and returned the same night to the wreck. After a few days' labor our efforts proved completely successful. We were able to free the hull of water at low tide, and

found the leak was a large round hole, evidently punched with a crowbar, and all the splinters on the outside. This we succeeded in plugging, and on the top of the next tide we floated our prize and took her in tow.

A decision as to what to do next was soon reached. We would anchor the Sparrow in safety while we went over to see Captain Flowers and tell him what we had found out and done. Early next morning we called at the saloon and told our story. The actual conversation will not bear repeating. It ended by the wreck being put up for sale, and by my buying it for fifty cents. Solemnly we drew up the bill of sale, signed it, had it duly witnessed, and I paid over a one-dollar bill, receiving fifty cents change.

Two days later, with the help of the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, we had hauled our steamer up on to the "hard," or beach, and their shipwright had safely executed all necessary repairs. We took the precaution to photograph the damage.

And now began our long tow to the south, for we had six hundred miles to go, and many calls to make on the way.

Once in a breeze of wind we parted the haw-

ser, but secured the steamer again, and, buying a new hawser at one of our ports of call, set out for our last long tow after four hundred miles of the journey had been accomplished.

It was a fine afternoon in November when we put to sea, but already late, and the winter night fell very rapidly. The wind rose strong with the night, and we were forced to steam fifteen miles out to sea to round safely a cruel series of breaking rocks off the worst headland on the coast. By midnight a heavy sea was running and we were obliged to go "dead slow," for the Sparrow, wallowing in the heavy seas, would first run almost over us, though she was at the very end of all the warp we possessed, and then, dragging behind again, the slack line would come suddenly taut with a dangerous jerk. It was my midnight watch below, and I seemed hardly to have fallen asleep when a dripping, oil-clad figure in my cabin woke me by shaking me and shouting: "The Sparrow's gone, sir."

"Gone where?"

"Parted the hawser, sir."

"How's the weather?"

"Dark as pitch and thick with snow; it's a dirty night, sir."

"Can't you see anything?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Very well; put the ship about and heave her to till I come on deck."

Rolling into those great swells, washed now and again by the tail end of a sea, we seemed to be a long while waiting for the morning. But it came at last and there, sure enough, every now and again, visible through the driving snow, as she rose on the crest of the surging water, rode the gallant little steamer Sparrow.

We worked up to her and lay by to see if the weather would moderate, for it was impossible to get aboard her in such a sea. But the signs of the sky were all for worse weather and our ship was small enough on a winter's night in the Atlantic. So we were forced at last reluctantly to abandon her and seek safety from the rising storm under the nearest land we should find. No one can tell our feelings as we saw the last of her, riding masterless to fight alone the unequal battle with those seas.

After the storm was over our little mission vessel spent three days searching those watery wastes in hope that even yet she might bring help to the little vessel. But nothing was ever

seen of her again, and the great, generous ocean hid in its bosom the traces of yet another crime.

It was the end of November, two years later. The country was under snow. The days were short and the nights long and dark, and every vessel that came in had a good coating of ice about her decks, with shrouds that looked like sugar, showing a sample of what was to be expected outside.

Every soul that could had left Labrador for the winter, and the Labrador coast was already wrapping itself in its impenetrable barriers of ice. The mission steamer Strathcona had already gone into winter quarters, and I was all ready to leave for a winter in England, when a cablegram was placed in my hand. "Barquentine Maggie reported lost on Dusky Islands, Labrador. Please investigate." It was from Lloyds, underwriters, and therefore demanded attention. We had seen the barquentine at anchor before we left for the south. It seemed a queer thing that she should have been on the coast so late. In the official protest of the vessel's loss which we now obtained from the shipping office, we found that the ship had started on her voyage to the Mediterranean market loaded with five thousand quin-

tals of fish; that while passing through a narrow tickle the rudder chain had broken, and the vessel broaching to had run hard and fast on the rocks. Great efforts had been made to save the ship, but all in vain, and though the crew had clung to the pumps till the ship was on her beam ends, their efforts had been in vain, and they had been forced to abandon her to save their lives. The wreck had been put up for auction and sold for eighty dollars to our friend the saloon-keeper.

Without seeing the vessel we could only accept the facts. To go down to investigate would mean both risk and expense, for it would be necessary to hire a steamer and take her six hundred miles to the north so late in the year, while the chances of saving anything seemed infinitely remote.

Some said "Go and try." The majority said "Don't."

However, we decided to try. So we hired a small steam trawler, shipped a crew, taking a diver and much wrecking apparatus, and left just after dark on our voyage of discovery. Three days later our little ship, a mass of ice, hove to off Dusky Island. She was so coated that all

spare hands were constantly employed chopping the rapidly accumulating ice from every exposed surface. All night we drifted about, unable to venture near, but at daylight we drew in toward the land. What an exciting moment it was! Would all our efforts be fruitless?

Suddenly a shout from the watch, and a joyful cry of "There's her spars away on the lee bow," greeted my ears.

"She hasn't much cant over, either" (is nearly upright), said the skipper, as we drew in near enough to see round the point of a big island. "And what's more, no sea is going to get in there to hurt her."

She was set up so high on the rocks, and seemed so trim looking for a wreck, that we were all mad to go aboard her at once. But she was beset with ice, and after we had anchored as near as we could go, it took our boats a long time to get alongside her. With no little excitement we climbed her sides. Instead of the confusion that a hastily abandoned wreck would suggest, perfect order reigned on deck. Hatches were not only closed, but still sealed. Evidently no cargo had been jettisoned to lighten the ship. Every door and hatch was neatly closed. The

once broken rudder chain had been neatly repaired. The ends of such ropes as were left were all well fastened. One block from the dismantled running rigging which was loose on deck, was carefully marked in pencil "topgallant haulyard," as if some lubber who did not know how to reset square rigging had marked it, with the intention of putting it in its right place next spring. But, oddest of all, only the starboard pump was in working order, and the brasswork necessary to work the other was on the shelf in the round-house.

The statement that the ship was only abandoned to save the lives of the crew was a false one. There was some water in the well. But after thawing out the pumps and pumping for four hours the Maggie was dry again.

No time was to be lost if we were ever to get out again. So, while the skipper took soundings round the ship to find the best way to haul her off, the diver was sent down by the mate to examine the damage to the hull. Meanwhile another party worked with a boat at each hatch, carrying the fish cargo over to our steamer and so perceptibly lightening the ship.

By the following night, though the constantly

making ice bothered us a good deal, the big anchors had been laid out and the line hauled taut to the ship winches. The diver's sketch of the ship's bottom showed she was only chafed in the neighborhood of her forefoot, and that at high tide she was now only aground forward. It would be high tide next day at eleven. All the fish had now been moved from forward.

At last the fated hour arrived. "All hands on the winches," shouted the skipper. Tighter and tighter the good warps strained. "Give it her, boys, only one more." "Now—now, jump on the levers"—and then a groan, a shiver, a long-drawn sound, and the good ship once more floated free.

To break into the store, rig the ship, revictual her, and replace all things necessary for a long voyage lost us yet another day. All night long the watches were at work. At length, appointing our mate as captain, and giving him two watches for his prize crew, we tried the most serious task of all, the "limbering up." The two great anchor chains fastened to the main mast were drawn through the hawse pipes and securely spliced to the ends of our doubly twisted steel wire hawsers.

Slowly we towed out in the early dawn, a

strong head wind blowing off the land. By night a heavy sea was running and the Maggie was plunging into it at the full length of both hawsers astern—one-sixth of a mile behind us—so that even the bright mast headlights we had given her were invisible for long periods together.

It was an eventful voyage for the next three days. In spite of all our indomitable skipper's care, one of the hawsers parted, and was only repaired after much maneuvering. Often, as we learned afterward, the ship dived so heavily into the seas that it was impossible for any one to live on deck. Indeed, even her lofty jibboom was broken by her diving. But, to our great joy, on the fourth morning we made the land, and, hauling in under its kindly shelter, once more reached our haven with "all our bunting flying." It was a sad end for our saloon-keeper friend. He was found guilty of "wilfully casting away the ship with the purpose to defraud the underwriters," and was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. An old man already, he had only time to serve a portion of the sentence before death took him. The saloon was closed. It has never been reopened.

Was it the gospel that was preached? Or is the gospel of Jesus Christ only to be preached with gloved hands? To us it seemed like following the Master into the courtyard of the Temple to cleanse it. It is true that if one gives blows one must also expect to receive them. Is it not possible we err sometimes on the other side, being partly influenced by the consequences we have to expect? Such things never influenced the Master. He made no reservation—not even a Cross.

JOHNNY

JOHNNY

The boy's name was Johnny Sexton. He was the oldest son of a poor Roman Catholic fisherman living about eight miles from St. Anthony Hospital, in a tiny cottage by the sea. One winter day, when everything was ice and snow. Johnny's father was away with his dogs getting wood for the stove from the neighboring forest, and his mother had gone out to a neighbor's house—which was some way off—for houses are not near together where Johnny lives, in Labrador. When his father came back to the house he saw a number of children coming along over the snow, dragging something with them. Alas! when they were near, he saw that they were dragging Johnny by his head and one leg. His other poor little leg was hanging down, broken, and trailing along on the snow. He had fallen off the "slide" or sleigh, which they had been using as a toboggan on the steep side of the hill, and had broken his thigh across the middle. In old days (only a few years ago) Johnny would have had

to lie for weeks in terrible pain, and could not possibly have seen any doctor for months. Now, however, his father could leave his little boy with his mother, and hurry away over those eight miles of hill and dale to St. Anthony to find the Mission Doctor.

It did not take him long to travel that eight miles, yet, oh, how long even that seemed to the poor fellow. The wondering dogs had never known him to shout and hurry them along so fast before. Gallop and strain as they would, they could not satisfy their master. What could it mean?

At length they topped the last hill, shot down like an avalanche some six hundred feet on to the snow-covered ice of the harbor, and a few minutes later, panting and exhausted, they were trying to bury themselves in the snow in front of the little Mission Hospital, to get out of the biting wind.

Was it only a piece of "luck" that the father found the Doctor had not yet started for a place some sixty miles to the south? Why, right there against the hospital was another big team of dogs—two days they had been traveling, and only half an hour before had arrived, bringing word

that the good priest at Conche was taken ill with sudden bleeding, and wanted the Doctor in hot haste. Yes, and even then, in the hall, was the doctor packing the familiar medicine box, and his man "Rube" stowing away some rough food in the "nonny bag," in case of being caught out during the long journey. Do you think it was chance? or did the Lord, who loved the children so dearly, allow that anxious father to be "just in time," even if for some good reason, known only to Himself, He had permitted this little one of His to meet this suffering?

"What's the matter, Pat, you seem to have dropped from the sky, from the look of you?"

" 'Tis an accident, Doctor. My Johnny's killed himself. Can you come back with me at once?"

The distress was so evident, and the pleading so heartfelt and urgent, there was no answer but one.

"Yes, at once, Pat, of course."

"Here, Rube, sling this old box on the lend-a-hand komatik, and lash it on well. It's a hilly road we'll have to-night, and it's dark now."

"Go in, Pat, and get a cup of tea, and Rube and I'll be ready in two minutes to race you home."

There were great tears welling up in the poor fellow's eyes, as, with a husky, choking, "God bless you, Doctor," he followed the maid to get some hot tea, which, indeed, he was badly in need of, having been out in the woods since morning.

"It's a beastly monotonous life you live among those people, isn't it?" a wealthy man said to me once, as if one could prefer to go to a theater every night, or vary that with progressive card parties and occasional dances!

"No, I can't say that I find it monotonous," I answered. A "God bless you," with the fervor of poor Johnny's father, is a fee that, once you have tasted the sweetness of it, would alone rob many of your days of much monotony. God grant us all in those hours of loneliness that will come—yes, will some day come to all of us—the gracious echo in our hearts of His words who draws near to comfort us in such hours, whispering, "Ye did it unto Me," "unto Me" . . ."to Me."

The barking dogs are soon straining at the traces. It is dark, and only the hospital lights reflected on the snow enable us to be sure that every knot is tight. There is a flash of steel as Rube draws his big hunting-knife across the

MONTAGNAIS INDIANS AND DOG TEAM

stern-rope, checking the komatik to a driving-post, and then the straining dogs leap off into the night before ever a word is given them to start. "Hist! Hist! Good Damson! Haul in there, Spot! Haul in!" There is no need of lash or spur, for the keen cold night-air makes the snow crisp and braces their magnificent muscles, while the fact that they know their food is still ahead of them, makes every dog anxious to get the journey quickly done. . . . Now we are overhauling Paddy's team. For, having impatiently swallowed his tea boiling, he has gone ahead to give our leader a line to follow.

"Look out, sir," we hear him shout. "You'd better loose your dogs. It's terrible icy on the cliff side going down to Crameliere Bay," and Rube has scarcely time to lean forward and slip the traces from the bowline before our faithful "lend-a-hand" shoots forward at a pace no dog can hope to attain, and gathering momentum each second warns us to cling tight, if Johnny is to be the only one with broken bones that night. Down—down—and down! Now and again a shower of sparks warns us that still some snags of rock are jutting out through the generous mantle of the snow. But Rube and I are

now lying full length on the crossbars, as close to the ground as ever we can get, so that we may not capsize or be shaken off. Fortunately we do not strike anything. I say fortunately, for we went down with closed eyes! The pace and the darkness make open eyes only an additional danger in such a descent.

Pat's haste had not allowed him to use even his drag of chain. Moments were hours to him that night. What might not be happening to Johnny while he was away?

Our faithful dogs were leaping on top of us almost as soon as the level bay ice brought the komatik to a standstill. To them it was the highest degree of good sport, and they were showing their joy in their boisterous dog way, tumbling over one another and us in their excitement.

" 'Tis just there, Doctor," came echoing above the whirring of our runners, as right below us a single twinkling light came into view far down the last hillside towards the sea.

Already they have heard us, those anxious watchers, and we see the light blaze up as some one brings it to the open door. " 'Tis welcome you are this night, Doctor. Come in, sir—sure

Rube knows where to get food for the dogs." Come in—Johnny's a bit easier, thank God. But it's longing for you to come we've been since Pat started."

No one could mistake it. The thigh bone was obviously broken in the middle. For as the child lay on his back on the bench, the knee and foot of the right side were at an angle with the little fellow's body that made one "creep" to look at.

"Get a plank, Pat, we must get to work at once, for I must leave at daylight." Pat, who was already clearing things away, a most necessary proceeding in so tiny a room for so many people, at once went out and brought in his only plank, well covered with ice and snow. It was not easy planing it smooth, still wet from the thawing ice. But these men are the "handy men" of this side the Atlantic, and with them obstacles are merely things to be overcome.

Meanwhile Johnny has grown drowsy, and at length has dozed off to sleep. In a minute or so, however, an involuntary twitch wakes the little fellow with a cry of pain. Fortunately we could spare his father now, and he went and held him in his strong arms to comfort him; yet as

soon as ever weariness overcame his fear the child would fall off to sleep again only to wake with a cry of suffering that made us feel miserably slow-fingered as we toiled on, padding the splints and getting all our preparations made.

Midnight had long passed before the lad was laid out on the rude table to have his limb set.

The naked body of a well-formed little child is a thing of tender beauty, and it would seem a cruel task to inflict suffering purposely upon it —even though meant in kindness, to set a broken limb. But God had placed in the hands of the Mission Doctor that which made it quite painless to the child—only a few breaths of heavy sweetened vapor and Johnny was off to a land of dreams, where twitching muscles could not give him pain, and whence even the straightening and grinding of the broken bone could not bring him back.

Two o'clock—"He'll do now, Pat, till morning. You must keep watch by him till he wakes. I shall sleep here on the floor, and you will call me as soon as he stirs. For I must be gone at daylight, as I told you. My assistant will be with you till evening to see the orders properly carried out."

"'Deed I will so, sir," said Pat. "There's no fear that I'll close my eyes this night." He had not seen chloroform given before, and he was still not quite convinced that Johnny would ever wake again. "No fear, Doctor—lie down—lie down." Already his wife had placed their only mattress on the floor in the corner.

"Just a word to ask God's blessing on the child, Pat. There's only one God over Catholic and Protestant." It was a very brief, but heart-felt petition that went up to Him who marks even the sparrow's fall. There ascended also a word of real gratitude from all of us. For should a doctor feel more joy if he had received his reward in those things that perish, than for the chance of a service to one of the least of His brethren, who have nothing to render again. God give us all, yet many times, that sweetest, peaceful sleep which comes from hearing, as it were, a curfew tolling in our very hearts for something ". . . done unto Me" ". . . done unto Me."

The red glow of the early morning, reflected from the boundless snow outside, was stealing through the little window as I woke after a sailor's rest of a "watch below." The dim outline

of Pat, sitting watching without a movement by the side of his little child was only just discernible, for even the tiny flame of one little lamp had been necessarily tempered to their scanty store of paraffin. He turned at my slightest move, and, seeing I was awake, whispered, "Johnny has just wakened up, Doctor. He has slept like a lamb."

"Put the kettle on then, for we must be moving. I am to meet the priest's messengers at the narrows of the long lake an hour after sunrise." Already I could hear, outside, the wakeful Rube calling the dogs from their hiding-places, and also the calling of some other driver, taking his team off betimes to the forest in the bay.

It was indeed a pleasure to find Johnny wreathed in smiles when I went over to where we had fixed up a level fracture-bed for him. I might have expected the look of fear, for he could only associate me with having pained him. But the plucky little chap had forgotten his woes, and was lost in the delight of cuddling the curly black head of my faithful retriever. "No pain, eh, Johnny?" No answer—only a look at his father, as if to ask, "What does he mean?" and he went on playing with his new friend the dog. So I took

it that the splint fitted, and was able to insist on Pat getting a nap "to oncst."

It was a glorious morning as we drove right out of the harbor mouth over the firmly frozen sea, galloping round the feet of the beetling cliffs that form so ominous a landmark when the mission steamer visits this cleft in the hills, in the summer time.

Human life is a long series of leaving things behind. In one brief hour the hummocky ice had shut from our eyes all sight of the harbor, where "only a poor fisher-lad lay."

Pleasure derived from what we "get" in life is a fleeting thing at best; it soon fades from our fickle memories, and must ever fail to give us back again the throb of delight we felt when first we thought we owned something new of the valuables of earth.

But the memory of having well used those valuables while we were stewards of them is a well of joy that is everlasting.

May God give us the open eye to see this while yet the talents are ours.

If there are no sumptuous menus, no silks and satins, no lordly halls and such like things to efface "the monotony of a life among those peo-

ple," there are at least many simpler pleasures and ever with us the scope of usefulness for our humblest talents, giving us the glorious pride of knowing that we also are united, as all may be, in service, not only with "those people," but with the King of kings—in whose presence there shall one day be joy everlasting and forevermore.

On our return journey we called at Johnny's cottage and took him to the hospital at St. Anthony for a time, while we set up the limb in plaster bandages. Now Johnny is well and running nimbly as ever on the hillside—soon to be able to help Daddy with his boat and bring to Mother his share of the harvest of the sea.

"THE JOY OF THEIR LORD"

"THE JOY OF THEIR LORD"

The mission steamer had just arrived off the post of the Honorable the Hudson's Bay Company, half-way down the coast of Labrador.

According to custom, the broad blue flag of the mission was floating aloft and the shrill steam whistle had just sounded her arrival.

The order to "let go" had just been given to the men at the anchor, and I was preparing to go below after the excitement of bringing the ship to her moorings. The chain indeed was still running out through the hawse pipes, when a man, evidently in great anxiety and haste, pulled alongside and jumped in over our rail.

"Oh, Doctor! T'ank God you're here at last. Poor Alice has passed away yesterday, and John is lying terrible ill, and there's the five little ones —and maybe, please God, you're just in time."

"Come, come, Harry, what's the matter? Is it a cough?"

"It never stops, Doctor. Night nor day, and he spits terrible with it."

Now, we had seen some cases of pneumonia coming up the bay, so "I'll be with you in two minutes, Harry," was all I stopped to say as I hurried below to get my emergency case of drugs. Without further conversation we pulled swiftly to a little wooded cove, and drew up the boat. Following him through a long, winding path through the stunted trees, I came soon to a little house where only a month before I had seen one of the happiest little families in the world.

My good guide's watchful young wife, a baby in her arms, opened the door as we reached it.

"He's sleeping, Doctor, t'ank God. Maybe he'll take a turn now," she said. "I've put the children to bed lest their noise should waken him."

I knelt down in the darkened little room by the sick man, and put my finger on his pulse. The almost painful stillness was broken at length by the young mother, who was evidently watching my face.

"Don't say it's too late, Doctor! Please God, he'll get well now, won't he?" and then a stifled sob as she could read no hope in my face.

"All things are possible with Him, Annie," I answered, "but surely He knows what will be best for us all."

For even as the moments ticked by on my watch the forefinger on the telltale pulse kept time, saying plainly, "Too late, too late, too late."

There are times when the call for immediate action leaves no opportunity for even one spoken word of prayer. It was prayer alone that could save this man now. So we three tried that remedy first together, not unmindful that where two or three are, there He is. Well we knew it then, even as we could hear in that deathlike silence the breathing of the unconscious children in the next room. Well has it been said that "Christian Science" is the reaction against our forgetting that Christ comes into the room with the physician as well as with the priest.

But the issue was not long in the balance. Our effort to aid nature in her last struggle awakened no response in the wearied body, and slowly the life we wanted so much ebbed away before our eyes.

When I returned in the morning the door was open, and the house was silent and deserted.

Husband and wife in their rough spruce coffins were lying side by side in the little outer room. The children had gone with the humble but kindly neighbors to their little home across the

cove. Silence reigned supreme, except for two jays fluttering about the chopping bench. It seemed as if death's victory was complete.

I was engaged with other patients during the day. But at sundown I heard Harry's voice again on deck.

"Doctor," he said hesitatingly, "would you bury the dead. 'Tis ten miles to where we— our graves is— but we thought perhaps—"

"Indeed I will, and you may tell the people I shall be starting in the mission steamer at ten in the morning."

"Us'll never forget your kindness, Doctor," he said. But just as he was leaving the ship he came back once more, the painter in his hand.

"Doctor," he said, "there isn't a bit of black for the children in the whole cove. Poor John had fallen behind a bit of late at the post, and anyhow us never looked for this."

"They shall have all there is aboard, Harry. But it will take the women all night to make anything out of it." With that we dived below, and soon found coats and black stuff enough for the emergency.

It was a sad cortege that next morning steamed with flags half-mast up the fjord. It

was a poor, ill-clad crowd that gathered on deck. The very care that had been so evidently bestowed upon garments that had seen better days, and yes, other generations, spoke most eloquently of the continual struggle with a hard environment. The bald, unornamented coffins, sawed from our gnarled and knotted trees, and blackened over with the meanest coat of paint, were evidences of the little that stood to help humanity in its fight for existence here, beyond their own stout hearts and good right hands.

The real pathos, however, lay in the overwhelming sense of vanquished aspirations. The whole entourage seemed to whisper uncannily to our poor friends standing round:

"It's only a matter of time. You must succumb soon. You can't keep the fight up long."

The very weather added to the harmony of desolation. A cold, bleak wind was chasing across a cheerless leaden sky, clouds burdened with snow from the unknown north. The first frost of winter had hardened the little soil there was on those relentless rocks, as if anxious to proclaim that it had no share in lending aid or offering welcome, even when death had done its work. Even two ducks, sole occupants of the

tiny bay, fled shrieking, as, bearing our toilsome burden, we landed on the sandy beach.

At length the grave was dug, the last look taken, the sand filled in, and around were left only the few pitiful, half-clad mourners, shivering in the bitter blasts of wind that swept the point, and weeping for what could never be undone. But in my mind were still ringing the words of triumph: "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us—us—the victory," while before my eyes were five little children in black, standing hand in hand by a lonely heap of sand, marking the place where lay all that had been their protection from the cruel world outside.

How would our "reasonable" Master, who at the cost of His own life had purchased our victory for us, have us translate the message of that love to these His children? How should we best serve Him both now and always?

By orthodoxy or by action? By theory or by practise? By faith or love?

> "May here His servants serve Him,
> May the cost not come between
> The service that they render
> And the service that they mean."

I fancied I could hear Him whispering now,

as he did of old: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

"Will, take the children aboard and let them go down into the cabin, and see that Peter gets them some tea. God bless them, they shan't want the things that perish anyhow till they can fend for themselves."

And so we took our first orphans. A long letter to friends at home asking them to help me with my children, brought me only a few answers. One was poorly written, and not altogether well spelled, but it bore a better recommendation. It was evidently the loving letter of a good, motherly woman, and came from a heart in which dwelt the mind of the Master. She said:

"Dear Doctor:—Me and my husband would like to keep a boy and a girl for the dear Lord's sake," and she gave me references to men I knew. So when we left the coast at the approach of winter ice, and went south to put the mission ship into winter quarters, Ernie and Bessie went with us to a new home in New England.

Twelve months later I was able to take a trip by rail and pay a long-promised visit to the chil-

dren. The train dropped me where the platform ought to have been, in the dark about four o'clock on a winter's morning. Everywhere the snow was deep on the ground. There were no houses to be seen, and the prospect was not encouraging. But soon I heard a cheery voice calling: "Doctor, is it you?" and a moment later I was climbing into an old farm sleigh, drawn by a patient old farm horse. It was the new mother of the children, whose characteristic energy had brought her all these miles in the night to meet me.

A long and wearisome drive it would have been, for the roads were only called so from courtesy, and were not materially improved by the stupendous snowdrifts. Nor were the—well, springs of our carriage as resilient as—but there, never mind, the company of so simple, so earnest a friend of the Master's would make any journey short.

The wild reception that the happy children gave me set my mind at rest at once as to whether or not they were in the right place.

Soon, however, I was to be puzzled again. For when morning came and I looked round the house I found only a small group of new build-

ings. They were roughly put together, and by the hands of this young couple themselves. The reclaimed land was only small, and was being hewn out of the backwoods by their own indomitable pluck. But beyond that, at breakfast I thought I heard a stranger's voice, and sure enough I was soon introduced to "our own baby."

As I drove back to the station, my cheerful companion chatting away as before, my thoughts would materialize into words, and when I asked her: "What made you take two great, growing children from far-off Labrador? Surely your struggle is hard enough without adding to it?"

"Well, Doctor, you see, Fred and me has been two years way out here, and besides what everyone else does we couldn't do anything for the Lord. There is no Sabbath-school to teach, and the church is so far away we seldom can go. So we thought the farm would feed two more for His sake. No, no. I wouldn't like you to take them back."

Surely they were entering into the "joy of their Lord."

UNCLE SILAS: FISHERMAN

UNCLE SILAS: FISHERMAN

It had long been my earnest desire to have a vessel for our work off the Labrador coast, large enough to allow us to extend our voyages as far north as Hudson Bay Straits during the months that the sea was free from ice. It was imperative that she should at least have auxiliary steam power, to enable us to carry our gospel to the most isolated and lonely dwellers of the far north. For we felt that their very loneliness would greatly enhance the value of our visits. After all, the main object in extending our work to Labrador had always been to carry the message of God's love in a practical and acceptable form to "those that were afar off." To us it seemed that we fell short of that end so long as there were still brethren to be helped that no one reached. We could not attain our object without some form of steam power. So I determined to spend a winter traveling and lecturing, trusting that He in whose name we worked would direct us where we might

obtain so expensive an auxiliary. If it were right for us to have this additional talent, we knew He could supply it. If not, well and good. We at least should have done our best. So when once the ice of winter had driven us off the coast again, in company with my colleague, a young Australian, I took tickets for Halifax, in Nova Scotia. A few days before Christmas, 1894, we found ourselves sitting opposite each other at breakfast in a Canadian hotel, quite at a loss what to do next. The trouble was that every one else seemed to know exactly what to do. The room hummed like a bee-hive with people hurrying about in every direction. We did not know a soul in this great North America. Which way to turn next seemed an inscrutable problem.

"Let us call on the Prime Minister," said my colleague. "If this were Melbourne, I know he would do his best for us."

This would certainly not have been a promising step in London, but here there appeared no reason against it, so the idea was accepted as an inspiration. We found the great man at home, and, to our surprise, we found also that a politician could be just as interested in any real extension of God's kingdom, wherever it might be,

as we were ourselves. That so important a man should at once put on his hat and be willing to walk out with two young strangers for the purpose of introducing them to his clergyman, and that he should be willing to ask him to help us raise the money we needed, appeared to us as direct signs of God's leading. So we were neither of us surprised when, less than a month later, we met a man who, during his early life, had lived thirteen years in Labrador. He asked us what it was we wanted him to do, and we told him we wanted a steamer and some money to keep it going. He said, "I shall be glad to give you a steamer and a thousand dollars a year towards the expense of the work."

So our steamer was purchased and fitted for sea during the spring of 1895, and we came over from England in July, as soon as the ship was ready. We steamed her from Montreal down the St. Lawrence and nine hundred miles along the Gulf, ever eastward toward the Atlantic. By the middle of August, full of elation, we were slowly approaching our southern hospital at Battle Harbor, and we anticipated the excited welcome of our colleague who was in charge. We were now only three miles distant, and running at

full speed. Our brasswork shone like silver; every rag of bunting floated aloft; some patients we were carrying with us were already on deck ready to be landed as soon as we arrived; we were thinking of nothing but the welcome that awaited us, when suddenly, rip—rip—rip! and our gallant little craft lay a wreck on a submerged reef not shown on our chart. As the Atlantic swell heaved in on the reef, the ship raised, stood, and fell over again with each rush of the sea, the sharp rocks splintering and grinding her sides. We at once lowered the boat, and set our patients safely ashore on the rocks, while we who "stood by" got out a stream anchor and tried to winch the ship off on the top of the heaviest seas. Everything that was not fast was thrown about and broken. It seemed to us all that her days were numbered. Hardly, however, had our cable come really taut when an extra swell came sweeping along. Our little craft rose on its crest, shivered for a moment, and then, with a mad plunge, rushed forward over the reef and swung to her anchor in deep water. Alas! our shaft was broken. Our propeller was gone. Water was rising in the well. And the only thing to do was to walk over the cliffs to the harbor in

which the hospital lay, and seek the help of the bait launch to tow our wreck into a place of safety. To arrive disheveled and alone, after walking over those long and wearisome rocks, was a humiliating experience. We had to assure the wondering crowd that we had not dropped out of the clouds, and that the new steamer they had waited so long for was lying a piteous wreck on the coast three miles away to the southward. It was the longest walk I have ever taken, seeing that the burden we had to carry with us was not a physical one, but the weight of veritably leaden hearts. The beautiful English sailing vessel in which the rest of our small staff had just come from England, was riding daintily in the roadstead. The crew had been hourly expecting our arrival, but alas! not in the way that we at length realized it.

Nearly four hundred miles of open ocean lay between us and the nearest port at which we could repair our damages, and there was no means whatever of getting a disabled vessel so far. So we set to work to caulk the leaks.

At length we sealed up the hatches, and made fast to our staunch schooner, trusting that she might tow us safely to our destination.

A day or two later we parted company. The skipper of the schooner sailed out into the Atlantic with the laboring steamer dragging behind, while I, with a sixteen-foot lug-sail dingey called the Urelia, started along the coast for the north. The boat being very small, I could carry next to nothing with me, and my valuable assets for the missionary journey were a kit-bag of clothing, a case of medicine and instruments, a small lantern with some slides, a Bible, a box of food and a keg of water. The prospect of accomplishing anything, to our short sight, seemed poor indeed. In my mind I was chafing and fretting at the ways of Providence, and kept saying to myself, "This summer is going to be wasted." But I found that His ways are not our ways, and that I had many things to learn which I could never have acquired over the rail of a smart steamer.

Everywhere the smallness of my outfit was the best introduction to the hearts of the people. The very fact that we needed the help of others brought out just those very traits of their characters which all our work aimed at reaching. It opened the road to the message we had come so far to deliver; the blessing of giving was

conferred upon those poor people instead of upon us; and we had to learn the lesson that the blessing we wanted to confer came by our having to receive of their poverty. In sharing the daily life in the tiny poor cottages along the coast we were able to appreciate trials and troubles that we otherwise would never have known of, and to appreciate the grim courage and patient heroism needed to face adversities that strike far deeper than the grosser dangers of ice and fog and rocks involve.

It was already late in the season. The first snow of winter had tipped the hills with white. Young ice covered the fresh-water lakes, and even filled the gulches wherever the restless sea found a little peace under the shelter of the headlands. The shortening days had warned most of the southern schooners to fly to warmer waters, and the freighters' families, who are only visitors to Labrador for the fishing season, had already re-embarked and left for their southern homes. There, even if they had failed to reap that year the harvest of the sea and so when winter came on would be unable to provide food and clothing for the long eight months of inaction, they would at least be in reach of supplies

when occasion arose. Though a small comfort, still that means relief from much mental suffering to a father who has a wife and children dependent upon him. For a dominant feature of the deep-sea fisherman's character is his great love for his little home on the land.

Meanwhile a southern-bound schooner, flying before the fast-making ice, had picked me up on my way. In true generous fisherman fashion they had heaved to as they passed me, and had swung me in on deck, boat and all. After crossing a fifty-mile open bay, they once more dropped me over their rail that I might visit a tiny, out-of-the-world settlement of liveyeres (or residents) of Labrador. My mast was already up, and my lug-sail spread to the onshore breeze before the crew of the Sparkling Wave had finished waving me adieu, as they tacked and stood off, to make an offing before dark. Before I made the land the sea was dancing merrily in the long narrow gorge between the high cliffs that make the entrance to Safe-harbor. However, the staunch little Urelia carried me safely through, and I was soon at anchor off the little houses.

"Where are you going to put up, Doctor?"

was the first question asked, as the fishermen came down to the stage and greeted me, as if one was accustomed to choose, as a free hotel, any home he pleased.

"Oh, take my things to Uncle Silas's," I said, choosing the little cottage of a fine old fisherman that lay close to where I landed.

"What time will you be holding prayers, Doctor?" seemed to be the most natural question to ask next; for in Labrador services are not relegated to certain fixed days.

"Why, as soon as tea is through at Uncle Silas's," and then, according to my custom, I started out to visit all around the little harbor, while one "hand" went up to tell Uncle Silas to boil the kettle. Uncle Silas, who is a widower, was still busy putting the last finishing touches to "the room" when I arrived from my little tour, and his "son's woman" had spread her best for the Doctor. As I "sat in" to the table a steaming pot of tea, or what is sold on the coast for tea, at sixty cents a pound, was placed before me. There was no sugar or milk. Just an old cup full of molasses, besides the loaf of soft bread, graced the table. "The room" is that part of a fisherman's house where all the best

furniture is kept, and into which the children are only permitted to peep when the schoolmaster or the chance preacher comes along. Alas! the glories of the furniture of Uncle Silas' room had become purely relative.

"You must excuse us, Doctor," Uncle Silas said, as he came in, "sure 'tis the first winter we has been without a bit of sugar, or morsel of grease"—by which he meant butter. "There isn't a sup of sugar in the harbor to-day; even Will Stevens couldn't reach to any this fall. The fish seems to have just left Safe-harbor altogether, these two summers. I don't know what the folk'll do, 'deed I don't, wi' nigh eight months before the traders are back. They say, too, that Brian's little store will be closed this winter, and the goods sent back to Newfoundland, as the winter man there says he can't refuse to trust people wi' things—not when he sees 'em starving. I don't know what folks are going to do, Doctor, 'deed I don't. Not unless the good Lord opens the windows o' heaven somehow."

As I sat and looked out over the harbor I saw my snug little dingey bobbing to her anchor, with her racy bamboo spars and her polished teak wash streaks, and knew that she would bear

me to where plenty reigned, and where anxiety for the mere daily needs of life would never be dreamed of; to where "give us this day our daily bread" meant only spiritual needs. I wondered how I had dared to question in my mind the love of God merely because He permitted me to lose my comfortable steamer. Often since I have wondered how He can abide our selfishness. As the people gathered to prayer I could see written in their faces the anxiety they felt, and in their clothing the fact that "ne'er a stitch o' new had come to Safe-harbor this fall." A cold draft blew in as still another man entered, and I shivered as I looked over at my warm old leather coat, and thought of the half-fed children and the Arctic winter coming. However, not a word of complaint was uttered as the men silently took their seats and knelt to pray for God's presence in Uncle Silas' room, some praying aloud to themselves, as is their custom.

It wasn't quite easy to choose a hymn which did not compromise one's own sense of sincerity just a little, and suggest that the idea of real brotherhood was more often sung about than acted on, especially as I thought again of my smart little boat and the plenty it would carry

me to. A non-committal hymn, one looking on the next world as the place for brotherhood, even sounded hollow when one thought of "Love thy neighbor as thyself." I could but notice how Will Stevens' little lad right opposite me coughed and how pale and thin he looked. I could also see Uncle Silas' only little granddaughter crouching behind the stove, barelegged, and with only a cotton frock on. No hymn seemed to suit the occasion, though I knew them all from cover to cover. Even "Shall we meet beyond the river" suggested, "If we do we will certainly remember all about our meeting here," and my heart added, "the hypocrisy of it!"

In the most natural way one man after another thanked God for His love to them and theirs, till, when at the close we joined together in the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread" nearly choked me. It was over at last, and the men rose to go home.

"Uncle Silas," I said, "it seems to me as if the Lord means me to help to open the window of heaven, or He wouldn't have sent me here to-night. It has just struck me that we want a store built right by the hospital, and it ought to be done this winter. I wonder whether

you men could get the frame out of the bay for me, and saw the plank with your pit-saws. I'd be glad enough to advance the food if you think you could look after it for me."

"My days for sawing are gone by, Doctor," he said, "but I'll gladly take the job in hand, and Sam here'll do my part, and I'll see to the stuff you sends, and have the lumber put here on my wharf for you, by when you comes next spring."

So, after all, our prayer-meeting ended silently, with only myself praying to know what sort of store it was we wanted, while the men's hearts breathed their thanks to God, as their faces plainly showed, even by Uncle Silas' tiny kerosene lamp.

"I reckon it will cost almost two hundred dollars, Uncle Silas."

That is, there were eight families, and I had estimated that they would need about sixteen barrels of flour, one puncheon of molasses, twelve tubs of butter and two barrels of pork. It was as much as I could see my way to pay for just then anyhow. Translated into work (to save their independence), it meant about five thousand feet of hand-sawn lumber, five thousand feet

of clapboard, two doors, sleeper, sills, wall pieces, couplers, and ties, free on board the mission vessel next June.

We had been so absorbed in our prayer-meeting that we had forgotten it was so late in the year, and that there was no place to get the food. "They'se all gone from Venison Trickle, Doctor, and I doubt there's no way to get any 'things' now till after the sea is frozen," said Uncle Silas sadly. "The traders has all gone long ago, and they knows well enough there is nothing here to bring 'em in, if they hasn't."

Yes, that was true, and it certainly did stagger us. For there wasn't a craft among their poor neglected fishing-boats in the harbor that would look at such a task as going south to fetch it, even if they were able to carry it.

"Let us sleep over it, Uncle Silas," was all I could say. "I think I'll turn in—I'm dog tired." But, for all that, the prayer-meeting wasn't over yet—not by any means.

The wind rose to a storm in the night, and even Uncle Silas' house, which clung like a limpet to the rocks, seemed to me in my dreams to be tossing fretfully under its violence. As I rose next morning, I could see the swell breaking

even inside the heads of Safe-harbor, and I knew there must be a "reg'lar sea running on the outside." But my mind was at rest, for the dainty little Urelia was riding easily to her new light forty-fathom chain.

"I wishes that some vessel would come in and take you and your boat safely to Battle Harbor—'deed I does. Sure, 'tis no time to be alone on the outside in that little thing," said Uncle Silas, as we sat down to breakfast on salt fish, dry bread and raw tea.

"Come, come, Uncle Silas! Why, you've seen the day when you'd have started for the North Pole in a boat not half as good as the Urelia."

"I wishes one would come along," was all I could get him to say, though I fancied I saw a gleam in his eye as he realized the compliment.

"I think I'll go and take a look at Will Stevens' lad," I ventured next. "He seemed to me to have an uncommon bad cough when I saw him last night."

"So do," he answered rather quickly, adding, "You'll not be trying to leave to-day, I'm thinking."

"Never mind, she's good enough for it if I do, Uncle Silas," I smiled, as I went out.

The child was lying on a wooden settle when I entered.

"Why, how's this, Willie?" was the first question. "Are you lying down this time of day?"

"My back hurts me bad, Doctor, if I stands long," said the child.

Very soon I had the little fellow stripped; a pack of skin and bones he was, and there was an ominous lump where the hollow of the spine should be. The spine itself was stiff and painful. It was the old story of commencing spinal disease from chronic poverty. Yet in the pity of it all, the sweet old words came welling up in my mind:

"There's a Friend for little children above the bright blue sky."

As I realized the meaning, I felt sure He is not only "above the bright blue sky," but that he is right down here on earth,—He who is the friend of all the little ones. I was certain now he would help us in our difficulty.

A loud rapping at my door early next morning warned me that something unusual had happened. There was the sound of many heavy feet in Uncle Silas' kitchen.

"Doctor," I heard him call, "Doctor."

"What is it, Uncle Silas?"

"Why, Doctor," he answered, "sure, one of them traders has run in for shelter. 'Tis one of Bourne's and she's almost log-loaded with 'things.'"

There could be no mistake about it. There she lay, a belated, storm-driven schooner, and an anxious, fretful captain. It had been necessary that yet one more poor human being should be made to chafe and fret at God's head-winds and at God's storms that appeared "all against" him, in order that once more His purposes might be worked out. We were not the very least surprised this time.

And so the mission hospital got a new store built next year, and Willie Stevens got all the food he wanted, while Uncle Silas saw his "windows o' heaven" opened.

PETER WRIGHT: MAIL CARRIER

PETER WRIGHT: MAIL CARRIER

Amidst the scattered and scanty settlements of our northern climate the great problems of the outside world afford little interest to our people. Thus, speaking to one man about the great victory of the Japanese over the Baltic fleet, and expecting that so great a victory would be of interest anywhere, I was not surprised when my auditor turned around and asked: "Who be those Japans, Doctor?" as if they lived in a part of Labrador. The irregularity of our communications with the outside world certainly affords us some excuse; but the difficulty in giving schooling to the children is another potent factor. We are, therefore, better acquainted with events no longer current, so that when I asked a man a while ago if he knew who was the greatest man in England he replied cheerfully: "Yes, sur; I guess he be Mister Bright." Even the factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at one of their large posts receives only one mail a year from the outside world. He has his daily paper put on his table

every morning. But his information is always exactly one year old.

It is little wonder, therefore, if our main interests are in ourselves and our own doings, and if we know, perhaps, more details about our neighbors than is good for either us or them. Indeed, few things happen along our shore which do not soon fly from mouth to mouth, and, as everywhere else, human characters cannot always stand such a test. Our gatherings for public worship can only be irregular and infrequent, and a man's godliness cannot be judged by his adherence to conventional rules. I have known the peripatetic parson himself to be actually caught trouting on Sunday morning, in blissful ignorance of the heinous offense he was committing! "For t' parson was adrift in t' weekdays." You may imagine how he startled the village by arriving on the Sabbath, trout pole in hand, a fine string of speckled beauties dangling by his side.

So in our minds we, who see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep, and have no doubt of His oversight of our affairs, grade our Christians by the way they do their daily work, and by their answer to the call of duty,

rather than by the standards which usually prevail.

All this is my excuse for telling you the story of our little mail carrier, Peter Wright, who in spite of an occasional dereliction we grade here as one of our best men. In the ordinary acceptance of the word Pete could not be called an athlete, body, soul or spirit. Yet his prodigies of endurance and devotion to duty have taught us at least to appraise highly both a strong will and a loyal heart among the essential assets of the true athlete. When it was his duty or when simple love in Christ's sense demanded it, Pete was an athlete, "sure enough."

In a burst of confidence Peter once informed me: "I t'inks I is fifty-eight years of age, Doctor." And this was before Dr. Osler frightened us from becoming sixty. I know he stands only five feet three inches in his stockings. He weighs one hundred and fifteen pounds, or rather less now, for he seems to be growing smaller year by year. He is perfectly erect, has piercing, deep-set eyes with heavy eyebrows. He answers questions almost as an automatic machine responds to a penny in the slot, shutting up with a snap. In this he is unlike his neighbors,

whose attention readily wanders during any prolonged conversation. Pete never was a gossip. He was born and reared on our coast, though of English descent. He is unmarried. In his early days his attention was given to fishing and to hunting like the rest of us. But years and years ago, to us it seems in the dim vistas of the past, he was appointed one of Her Majesty's mail carriers, and that position he has held ever since. Some think him a special creation for that purpose.

The mails come to our village from the nearest point on the recently-built railway line more than one hundred miles away to the south of us, until that road is closed by the struggling trains getting buried in the winter snows. Then they come all around the island by carriers, and reach us from the north and west.

Some of the carriers drive large teams of dogs. Others, like Pete, having steep hills to climb and dense woods to go through, prefer "shank's pony." For they can then make short cuts, dodging, as it were, from drogue to drogue of trees, and can cross ice-covered bays that would not be safe for dogs. When the sea permits it, our letters come by steamer, and then Pete has only

to row along thirty miles of coast between her ports of call. This he does cross-handed and alone in his tiny punt, the roaring surf of the open Atlantic rolling in on the cliff being all he has to speak to.

The distance for each carrier varies. Pete's is about one hundred miles "on the round." Now this task would involve no special fortitude or heroism in a country where houses are frequent and where roads exist; where rivers are bridged and arms of the sea have ferries; where dense woods have paths and trackless barrens are "poled;" where travelers going to and fro keep communication open and afford a chance of help to any one overtaken by accident. Nor would it be such a task if "people wasn't lookin' for you reg'lar," so that you could choose your weather for traveling. But Pete's round possesses none of these facilities. There is no road at all. There are no bridges and no ferries. Scarcely any one ever travels the paths except where a solitary trapper crosses them in his fur rounds. Houses in places are as far as twenty miles apart. There are mountains to climb and rivers to cross, bogs to navigate or circumnavigate, impenetrable barren uplands and large lakes. From the begin-

ning to the end of winter the whole circuit is hidden under a deep covering of snow which obliterates all landmarks. It gets deeper and more deceptive as the months pass by, and in the dark short days of January it is one wilderness of white. When May comes and brings spring to those in more genial climes, here the rivers are fretting dangerously at their winter bonds, and any unexpected moment may find their freedom again. The lakes are subtly undermining the bridges we have used all winter. They are still so like the trusty ones that we have become familiar with that the unwary will be caught. Meanwhile the ponderous mantle of the winter sea is breaking up and, suddenly yielding to the persuasion of the strong westerly winds, has more than once broken from the land while the traveler has been crossing the wide mouth of some bay. So he and his have gone seaward on a craft that seldom, if ever, brings him back home again. All that we know when one of these accidents overtakes us is that "Jack was seen at ———, but never reached the goal he was making for." For the rest—as to what happened—no one will be one whit the wiser.

Yet this is Pete Wright's regular beat. Year

after year this small solitary man has compassed this round ten to twelve times every winter. Regular as clockwork, he turns up at each of his appointed stations once a fortnight. The man comes and goes like a meteor.

We were pitying ourselves one night as we turned into our comfortable sleeping bags on the floor of our host's tilt. Pitying ourselves because it had been a heavy day on our dogs, and it was nearly ten o'clock before we reached shelter. When I woke in the morning, as the gray dawn was stealing in through the little window, I thought I heard a movement by the stove. There seemed something almost uncanny about it, till I made out what it was, and could distinguish a tiny, erect figure sitting bolt upright, where none had been over-night. It proved to be Peter Wright. He had arrived about two in the morning, noiselessly stationed himself by the stove and, recharging it, had gone straight off to sleep, sitting on the settle, without a word to any one, as satisfied as if he were in a feather bed. Now this place was where three carriers meet. The one from the westward was late, and Pete did not get his mails handed over until nine in the evening. He had thirty miles to his next sta-

tion and the temperature was 20 below zero. At ten he rose to go. "What, Pete, never going to leave at this time of night are you?"

"Why, sure," he replied. "With a moon like this 'tis better in the woods than when them skeeters (mosquitoes) are about. So long, Doctor," and with that he went out absolutely alone. A good day's travel is thirty miles. On a sick call he has covered forty-five miles. "I only counts on two and one-half miles an hour; but I find I soon kills out them that travels four for the first day or two."

Pete carries nothing with him but his precious mails. These, at times, weigh sixty pounds and over when he sets out, and the heavier they are the prouder he is of them. On one occasion, the southern carrier having been late, Pete had only two unstamped local letters to carry, and when we met him by the way he was almost too ashamed to stop and speak to us, though many men would say: "Us gets the same pay for the round and has less to carry." And yet others: "It ain't worth our going at all for two letters. Us'll let them two bide over till next mail." Not so Pete. Though some think his only a humble work, to him it was always a post for which he, Pete

Wright, was responsible. No one else would do it if he left it undone, and therefore must he go if there were no letters at all. But he felt it a sort of lack of confidence, due possibly to some fault of his own, that he should have so little entrusted to him.

I can remember one other occasion on which he was even more crestfallen. On our southern journey we met him one night joyfully staggering along under a huge weight of mail matter to the same tilt at which we were preparing to stay the night, so we, being the largest recipients of letters in our district, were anticipating over tea the opening of the mail bags afterward.

At last the seal was broken, the twine cut, and there fell out on the floor an innumerable number of the same kind of packages. They proved to be simply one large consignment of patent medicine advertisements. If we had had faith in the testimonials to their extraordinary value, we should only have been left the more sorry. For it was as impossible for us to get any of that elixir vitae as to get strawberries and cream. Meanwhile, Pete had left one bag behind because he was physically unable to "spell" the two

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on his back at once. The mails are carried in waterproof bags and so slung over the back as to bring the main weight high up between the shoulders. Pete never carries either compass or waterproof covering, though in spring he arrives sometimes in fog as thick as pea soup or drenched to the skin by what he calls with a contemptuous smile only a "sou'westerly mild."

He has arrived after midnight, only his deep-set eyes visible, his handkerchief tied over his mouth and frozen there, so that it would take full ten minutes to thaw it off, up to which time he could not utter a single word. He carries nothing to eat but a cake of hard bread (or ship's biscuit), as that does not freeze like soft bread. But these later years, having fewer teeth left, he has to moisten the aforesaid biscuit before he can demolish it. Now, when lakes are frozen to the bottom and rivers are twenty feet under snow, this is no easy task. So Pete has to depend more and more on his knowledge of boiling springs, for he never yet was "nish" (tender) enough to stop and boil the kettle when he could melt snow for water. Indeed, he never carries an axe, though no traveler who thinks of personal comfort would ever venture

out in this country in winter without one. For an axe means a fire, a tilt for shelter and a hot drink, if one happens to be overtaken in the woods, as the writer has been.

"But after March comes in, I does carry soft bread," he confided to me. It was a kind of indulgence he allowed himself after the back of the work was broken.

It was only by chance I discovered that Pete possessed any frailties common to our kind. For my hostess once told me she occasionally persuaded him to accept dough boys, "with a little chopped pork and molasses pounded in to prevent 'em freezing, and cos Pete says they gives a won'erful light to his eyes." But in spite of these, and even a rare slice of boiled pork, he is forced to be a man of moderation. For his two meals a day, morning and evening, are far apart, and often enough consist only of dry bread and tea innocent of either milk or sugar.

Our folk regard one thing about him as doubtful. He travels every day, considering the imperious call of the mail superior to that for Sunday rest. We might understand this when there are "sealed" letters (magic word) in his bag. But as they usually are only of the class that con-

tains "I hope you finds this well, as it leaves me at present, thank God," we are a little fearful for Pete's moral welfare. As a rule Pete responds to the mail as an arrow to a bowstring, though "However hard pushed I is, Doctor, I always tries to get two hours' sleep in the twenty-four." And he once said to me, half apologetically, "I don't reckon, Doctor, when a man has an easy mind that five or six hours is too much."

Peter smokes, by doctor's orders, after each of his two meals. "I finds it does me good on times," he says. But he admits that he finds the pipe at night "sweet enough." Tobacco was originally ordered him for a kind of asthma he suffered from; but I more than fear that that can no longer be blamed for the continuance of the habit. If he were to exceed the prescribed two pipes, he says, "It does me harm, I know."

Pete's two inseparable friends are his small knobbed stick, which he cut himself in the woods, and his snow rackets. Large and round they are, not built for speed, but to keep him up. "The least sink breaks my step," he says, "and that soon tells. No, I never takes them off, not even on hard ice. You see, I was always terrible on rackets from a boy."

Peter Wright: Mail Carrier

Pete is a man we all love. For Pete seems to love every one. He is always ready to oblige, and never happier than when the space on his back, ordinarily monopolized by his official bundle, permits him to carry a 10-pound tub of butterine, or a couple of gallon jars of molasses, just to oblige. It isn't for the filthy lucre alone that Pete works. His magnificent remuneration is ten dollars a trip, and out of this when there is more than he can carry he must hire another man to "spell what's over." It is lucky for Pete he does not have to pay hotel bills as he journeys from place to place. There would be little left of the salary beyond enough for "skin boots" if he were charged for meals. But there are no hotel bills on the coast, and we are incapable of an idea so original as to ask Pete to pay for anything.

So, by his never-failing cheerfulness, his high sense of responsibility to his humble position, and his absolute self-forgetfulness, Pete has endeared himself to the whole coast. And when his race is run and he, in common with all of us, can carry only his record with him, we shall all expect him to hear from the Master, the righteous Judge, "Well done." He says he has been a little nervous of late about a pack of wolves which

followed the western carrier, for "you see I only has my old stick to help me." But some of us slyly wink when the wolf story comes up, for we pity the wolf that would try to digest so indestructible a phenomenon as Peter Wright, mail carrier.

UNCLE RUBE'S NET

UNCLE RUBE'S NET

It was the gossip of our cove at that time that Rube Cassels was hauling out a house from the woods.

Till he was twenty-one years of age he had bided home, and turned in all he earned to the support of a family of numerous brothers and sisters. But now he was a man full-fledged, and it was the custom of the coast that he should have "half his hand" for his clothing and to put by for his own use.

So for four more years he had steadily stacked half his fish in a separate bulk, and each fall had carried it off to sell it to the traders for the few things he needed, stipulating that he must have the balance in cash. Now, though cash was a commodity a family man had scarcely ever any hope of getting, for the credit system gave them no option as to where they must sell their fish, a young man with no family ties would be free to freight his fish to St. John's if he were so minded.

So Rube's stocking, in which he banked his money, grew heavier as the years went by, for those were times of comparative plenty on our coast, and good voyages were common. So now, at twenty-six years of age, the neighbors noticed that beyond the fire wood that Rube was wont to haul out for the house, he was gradually building a pile of good stout sticks, and that instead of following the gun, of which he had ever been "amazing fond," he would spend the spare time chopping and squaring some of "they sticks." It was a sure sign enough. For "them sticks could only be for studding a house wi'," and long before the snow came and made going in the woods impossible, and while the harbor was still frozen, so that punts could not be out looking for fish, the fact that Rube contemplated a house was known. The confirmatory evidence was supplied when he got his cousin Charley to come on thirds, and saw boards with him from the remaining logs with the great pit-saw.

The best part of next season's earnings went in nails and shingles, glass and paint, tarred felt and stoves, and by the Christmas following Rube had up a tiny studded house, well stogged with dry moss and shingles, clapboarded, and only

SUMMER FISHERMAN'S HOUSE IN LABRADOR

waiting a mistress to add one more home to our cove. This fault was remedied at New Year's, when Rube proudly led to the altar in our little meeting-house as capable and thrifty a lass as ever entered on the responsible duties that lay before her.

It was characteristic of Rube that he always looked forward and anticipated coming difficulties, so that, as his family increased and sons and daughters were added to him, the little house grew too, bit by bit, till it was more like a patchwork quilt than anything else. But Rube was only a hook-and-line fisherman. He never could get far enough ahead to own a big net and employ sharemen to help him to make a big catch of fish. So he had to work cross-handed—that is, to row alone to and fro from the fishing grounds—and that handicapped him greatly when the weather was rough. Then again the fish came along very uncertain in their arrival, or, as the men call it, "spotty," so that one or two years, work as he could, Rube's total catch did not amount to enough to feed and clothe his family. Food had to be reduced to the merest necessities. They "couldn't look at clothing them years," and the little family

even found it hard enough to make ends meet. Whether it was anxiety, or whether it was natural, no one ever knew, but while not forty years of age, Rube's hair became quite white. This, with his quiet ways and large family, had earned him his title of "Uncle Rube" long before, by shore custom, he was entitled to that title of affection.

Among a peaceful and God-fearing people Uncle Rube had always been a rather more than usually regular attendant at prayers, and it was only to his self-reliant and reserved nature I had attributed his never taking any part in the prayer-meetings or Sunday-school. But as he had never plainly declared in open meeting that he was converted, as is the custom with our folks, they all took it for granted that he was not a Christian. At the prayer-meetings, therefore, his name was often mentioned as a subject for special prayer, though in earnestness and tenor of life, and in fidelity to his family, there wasn't a man on the shore that could be placed above him. However, the deep waters he was passing through in spite of his most strenuous efforts, had driven him to think more of the need of help outside himself, and, having too much self-

respect to seek help from neighbors, he one day startled the congregation by staying to the after-meeting.

As he took no part and gave no sign, no one could guess how it had affected him. But that he had found something in it was evident from his remaining behind again the following Sunday. He told us afterwards, extraordinary as it may seem under the circumstances, that it was the feeling that perhaps he ought to be doing something for others, that was growing on him; that though he never felt the surging emotion which apparently made some stand up and shout out before all others the fact of their own salvation, yet it was the feeling that he could best learn how to do that something by staying to after-meeting that first led him to remain. And when at length the light came, it came not in the usual form as if he had himself suddenly been saved from destruction, but rather as if God would show him that he was a son by offering him a share in the work of redeeming others, so Uncle Rube offered to take a class in the Sunday-school, and at last, thank God, though after no little hesitation, for he had not shown what we, on the coast, considered the proper signs of

being in a fit condition for the post, he was accepted.

It has always seemed to him that the delay was the very crisis in his own affairs, the chastening, as he called it, that saved his soul. For the only men whom Uncle Rube in his mind could never allow were Christians, were those who could do good and did not. To him the lost soul was always not so much the sinner, as the idler,—the burier of talents.

Reference to his roughly kept accounts at that time shows the straits to which he was being driven. As the details are peculiar to our coast, I give them here as he gave them to me:

Caught 20 quintals of fish (about 2500 fish), at $2.30	$46.00
Value of cod oil from same	12.00
Share of salmon in one net (120 fish)	9.50
Working on the road	3.00
Herring in a single net	2.00
Sawing boards with pit-saw for another man	15.00
One sheep killed (he had five), but must keep the rest for wool	3.50
Seven barrels of potatoes, two kept for seed, at $2 bbl.	14.00
	$105.00

Uncle Rube's Net

Deduct for expenses on boat, rope, canvas, nails, paint	$5.00
Salt for fish	6.50
Lines, hooks, etc.	2.50
One pair fishing boots	4.00
Oilskins	3.50
	$21.50
Total net earnings	$83.50

Necessities for self, wife and six children for the 12 months:

Thirteen barrels of flour (more needed because of few things to help out), second quality, $5.50 bbl.	$71.50
Molasses, forty-five gallons at 45c. (no sugar available)	20.25
Hard bread, 3 bags at $4.00	12.00
Tea, ten pounds, at 40c.	4.00
Oleomargarine, 50 lbs., at 20c. lb.	10.00
Kerosene oil, 10 gallons, at 30c.	3.00
Matches, needle, thread, etc.	2.00
	$122.75

Thus even many necessities were beyond his reach. For clothing, gunpowder, shot and a thousand other materials, there was nothing available. Yet all Uncle Rube deduced from it was, "I think I ought to be doing something for others.

That's what God would learn me." And, indeed, it seemed from subsequent events as if it were so. For somehow they "put the winter over them," and the following year Jack, the oldest boy, helping him, Uncle Rube had a really good catch. The price of fish rose also to $3.00, the old gun, six foot in the barrel, was deadly for ducks or even with ball for deer. Of this he was always very fond, so that a sigh of joy escaped him when she was once more brought down, cleaned up and loaded—more especially as he got a bit of "fresh" for all hands during the winter.

Nor was that all. Jack was now big enough to cut up wood at home. So Uncle Rube could tend his fur-path again, as he used to do before. "As the Lord would have it," he was lucky enough to catch a good fox, with the result that when summer opened, he actually had, for the first time since his marriage twenty years before, some cash carefully hidden away in the old stocking.

Jacky, too, was able to work a good line now, and when settling day came once more, with Jacky's catch and his own, Uncle Rube ordered 100 pounds of twine. For he was determined to have a trap net of his own some day.

Uncle Rube's Net

You can't jump from poverty to affluence all at once on our coast. And this was the case with Uncle Rube. But what, with a bit of credit for twine, and the boys being big enough to help him to knit it up, the great net kept "a growing and a growing." It was the gossip all along the shore then that Uncle Rube was going to have a trap. He became in our minds a man of substance and importance in proportion. No longer only a hook-and-line man, not even a shareman, but the owner of a trap himself. It added a certain dignity to all of us on the coast, the fact that the very owner of a trap net lived right among us.

It was a wonderful day when at last the great net was stowed into the new trap boat that Uncle Rube had built with the help of only the two lads, Jack and Will, for they were sizable lads now. And when at last it was wet for the first time, and safely moored to a projecting headland, well known as a resort for cod, there proved to be need for only one shareman besides Uncle Rube and the two boys, and that was Cousin Charley, who had helped so long ago to bring out the house with Uncle Rube.

The ice was well off the coast when first the

precious net was put out, and Uncle Rube had had two hauls out of it, the firstfruits, we all thought, of a rich harvest.

"I've got as much as I used to get all summer cross-handed," he said to me, with pardonable pride, as he came aboard one Saturday evening that I lay at anchor in the harbor. " 'Tis a wonderful thing, Doctor, a wonderful help to poor folks. If things goes well I'll pay off the few dollars I owes on her this very first summer."

It was a beautifully fine sunny and calm morning on Sunday, and when I came on deck I found that already the flag for prayers was up ashore to greet the day of rest. There was every prospect of a helpful time together, and the oily calm of the deep blue water reflecting the sunshine made it even in these northern latitudes as warm as May.

But just as we were leaving the ship's side one of our crew called my attention to the fact that the incoming tide was bringing some pans of loose ice along shore, in towards the harbor heads. "I hope there are no traps out at the heads," he added. "It will surely carry them away if it comes tight to the shore." Yet it required no great acumen to see that one trap did

stand in great danger, and that trap was the hard-earned property of Uncle Reuben.

"All right, go ahead. I'll tell Uncle Rube he'd best go out and loose his moorings, and let the net swing in to the shore, or at least let it sink, if he doesn't fetch it in."

As we climbed the hill to the rude wooden building that served us for our meetings, we found the whole population already gathering outside, and waiting, as usual, for our arrival. There was no need to mention the matter of the ice, for already it was perceptibly nearer, and the men's keen eyes had long ago taken in the situation.

" 'Tis coming down right on the trap, I says," I heard one old fellow remark. "I ain't been a fishin' here these fifty years, not to know which way the tide be sweepin.' "

"I believes you're right, Uncle Robert," said another, and then they made way for us to go by.

"Good morning. Where's Uncle Rube this morning? Surely he must have noticed the danger to his net."

"Sure so, Doctor, but Uncle Rube's off to the meetin'-house showing folks in." They evidently knew more than they said to me, for they all

turned and watched as I came up to the door at which Uncle Rube was standing.

"You'd better go and get your net, Uncle Rube," I began, "or likely enough you'll lose it. I should think it only right if it were mine."

Uncle Rube looked at me and then out at the headlands, perfectly visible from where we stood; a lump seemed to be choking his throat, as he replied: "I know 'tis a poor look-out for the trap, Doctor, but I can't go out to-day to save even that." And again he looked away towards the house of prayer, as if to avoid the great temptation.

"But, Uncle Rube, the Sabbath was made for man, and I'm sure I should feel quite right in going out to save the means of getting my daily bread."

"It might be all right for you, Doctor," he said, this time without turning his head. "But there's folks in this harbor as only wants an excuse to go fishing Sundays, and I'm not going to be the one to give it them. God help me."

"But, Uncle Rube, think what it means. You'll have no way to get your winter diet."

"The Lord has looked after that all these years, Doctor," he replied, "and I'll trust Him for that."

There was no more to be said. We went into the building, which soon filled up, and as we sang together the familiar hymn

> "Simply trusting every day,
> Trusting thro' a stormy way,"

it seemed to me as if no one had any right to sing it but Uncle Rube, whose eyes were riveted on the book, and who was singing it, it seemed to me, as I had never known it sung before.

By the time service was over the ice had gone by. Had it taken Uncle Rube's trap? At the afternoon Sunday-school, of which Uncle Rube was now superintendent, no one ventured to say a word about it. But though Uncle Rube had not had down his spy-glass he must even then have known that a large part of his hard-earned net was being carried along that rocky coast by the remorseless ice, and being slowly pounded into shreds as it went along.

Next morning at day-dawn we were just getting under way, at three o'clock, when looking over the side, I saw a boat already coming in from the heads. It was Uncle Rube, his boys and their shareman. They had gone out at five minutes past twelve o'clock and were coming in with the

remains of the trap. I hailed him, and he brought his boat alongside.

"I do hope it isn't much damaged, Uncle Reuben."

"Well, it might ha' been worse, thank God," he answered, cheerily. "It'll take us a fortnight, I doubts, to get her in the water again. But I'm thinking we'll not get twine again till next fall."

"A fortnight! Why the caplin school will be over by then, and the trap fishing won't be any more good this year."

"That's true enough, Doctor; but I've seen worse times, and, please God, us'll do better with her come next spring."

I hadn't the heart to say anything more at the time. But I know since that his perfect peace of mind was due to his conviction that this was the thing the Lord wanted him to do for others. So his boat passed on ashore, and we, too, went our way, having had a helpful Sunday; but in a way that we didn't expect.

Twelve years have rolled away since then. Who would venture to say Uncle Rube is now one penny piece the poorer? His boys have grown to strong young men, while his girls have gone off to homes of their own in the coves

near by. His hair is now whiter than ever, though his step is still as firm. And Uncle Rube has possessions more precious than the lost net could ever have given him. His own simple trust in God has been given to all his children—and they in turn are rearing yet another generation to serve the Master. For the foundation of their faith was laid not in what they were told—Uncle Rube never was a talker—but on what their eyes had seen in him through all the years—and they in turn are learning to know that the only life that is life at all is the Christ-life—the life that is lived to do something for others.

[redacted]

GREEN PASTURES

GREEN PASTURES

Yes, sir. 'Tis uphill work tryin' to get ahead when you has a hard family—but, bless the Lord, he have always brought me through.

I were only a slip of a lad when father and brother Tom were lost in the Glad Tidings, and I had to fend for mother and the two girls.

No, there were no insurance on Bay craft in them days, and all us had to look to was t' hook and line. You supposes us saw bad times? Well, no—bless the Lord—He never 'lowed us to want a bit t' eat, though it were hard enough to reach to clothing on times. But the Lord, he gived us good neighbors, and mother, she al'ays 'lowed as how t'were "green pastures" he led us through.

Like most fishermen, I married real young, and soon a lot of toe biters began to come along, and it were hard enough then to keep the bread box full—that is, on times.

I was shareman them days with my Uncle Rube, but it were uncertain work, and if I hadn't done well with my traps furring it would have

gone hard wi' our daily bread some winters I'm 'lowing.

So in b'tween times in winter I hauled out the wood to build a fishin' skiff of my own, and some o' our neighbors lent me a hand a riggin' of her out. It weren't altogether that us earn't more—but it left me ne'er an idle hour, as then all I could get were for my own hand. And you knows, sir, that when a man has women folk a 'pending on him, he wants to be at something all the time, if it's only to keep his mind quiet.

Well, sir, the fish began to fail round home afore our oldest lad could hold a paddle, and all who could used to pack off to Labrador every May month and bring back the fish they caught in t' fall o' the year. But mother were that feeble ever since the shock o' father's death, I couldn't make out to leave her. For you sees, sir, it wasn't as if us knowed what had happened to the Glad Tidings. Her just sailed out t' the grounds, and never comed back.

Mother never would believe she were lost. For never a chip o' the vessel were found to tell us what happened, and she were as staunch as good wood and good work could make her. Ice it were, I 'lows. For in the dark you can't see

one of them northern growlers when them's just level wi' the water—not even if so be you'se be looking right at 'em. Father were a driver, too. Bless yer, sir, he never thought no more o' danger than he did o' nothing. Ice it were. Ice sure enough, I 'lows.

Till long after open water mother used to be up early and late a-watchin' and a-watchin' for the Glad Tidings. And, poor as us was, t' light never went out o' our window from dark to daylight all that winter through. "You'se never knows, Johnny," her used to say, "the Lord may be gracious to we yet."

The first season after she were taken us all went down to Labrador in my Uncle Rube's schooner, the Ready and Go.

We was sorry to close our little home, for it were all us had, but o' course Mary weren't willing for me to go wi'out her and the children. And, indeed, a man needs a 'ooman to help make his fish and cook his food if he is to do anything what's worth while, alone, that is "cross-handed" us calls it.

We was eager to be down early to be ready by when t' fish first set in, and there was still a deal o' floe ice about after us rounded Cape John.

We was just packed full o' people beneath decks. For there were, first o' all, a load o' salt in her, and then bar'ls o' flour and pork and molasses, and nets and ropes and boxes, all covered over wi' old sails, and then the women and children on the top. For they never comes on deck at sea. There ain't no room for 'em anyhow, even if 'em wants to. Us men just sleep'd anywhere.

It were my first experience o' the Labrador, and I has nothing to say ag'in them old rocks. Them's served me good these many a year, though us has had our bad times like t' rest.

There was lots o' tag ends hanging from our planks afore us reached our harbor that year from scudding through the ice. Yes, and there were plenty o' ice candles a-hanging from our bows, too, before us left for home again. Well I minds it, for it were the only October fish I ever carried from the Labrador. But we was eager for every tail, and the fish held on late. Aye, and the Lord prospered us, too, for us never wet an anchor on the journey back, 'cept what us wetted on the vessel's bow. No, not till us was right off our own home again.

Come spring again us sawed 'round the Ready and Go early in May, and hove her down to

DAWN (IN SPRING)

caulk her, wi' our trap boats full o' ballast slung from her mast heads. Then us cut a channel thro' the standing ice wi' our pit-saws, and so was among the very first vessels to start down. Us fell in wi' the floe in Green Bay, but t'were only in strings, so Uncle Rube were for standing on and chancing it, and there were none o' us youngsters to say him nay. Well, sir, we was running free wi' a smart sou'west wind, when about midnight us struck a big pan fair and square, and the sea drove us right over it, or I don't know how t'would have been wi' us. Careful us was sure enough after that. For her timbers was shaken enough to frighten some o' us. But, in spite o' all our care, just before dawning the only passage us could see was between two great growlers. The ice was tightening up before the breeze, and just as we was passing between them, clip they goes. The women had just time to jump on to one of the pans, as they was—right out o' bed—and we was landing a bit o' grub and an old sail, when down she goes, stern foremost.

Yes, it were cold enough, floating about there, but that wasn't the worst. For just after sunrise the pan split right in two, and went abroad

wi'out a moment's warning, so that us parted from the women and lost our only boat, and then had to watch 'em all day drifting right away from us. But, praise the Lord, it kep' fine and sunny all day, and the sun off the ice were that hot us was well warmed up afore night. There be scarcely any night down there that time o' year, and by the mercy o' God, in the morning a whole fleet o' vessels hove in sight, reaching along wi' a mild sou'west wind—scarcely a open track but there were a vessel in it, and it weren't long before us was all picked up as hearty as us could wish. Yes, us lost that summer on the Labrador, but there were fish in somehow close to the old home, and I wouldn't be saying us didn't do nigh as well as if us hadn't lost the old Ready and Go. Indeed, when us came to count up at Christmas there were plenty and to spare to carry us through the winter, wi' ne'er a hungry day neither, so you can guess it were a gladsome family what gathered that blessed day to thank the Lord for all his goodness.

Well, sir, it weren't till my three lads grew to be stout boys that us began to get ahead and to lay a bit by ag'in bad times. But when them three could handle a line apiece, and us had two

boats to the fishery, us began to think about gettin' a schooner for ourselves. O' course it meant a bit o' pinching and o' stinting, but at last us come to terms wi' our merchant i' the bay to get us a schooner, if us could find three hundred dollars and the gear. What a winter that were! Us netted a terrible big trap, besides all t' other work, and it were a proud day wi' us, sir, when at last us sailed out o' the narrows on the Ocean Bride, all our own, sir. A big venture, though, for us owed fifteen hundred dollars on her on t' merchant's books.

We was to make the two trips, sir, like most o' our boats do, getting a load if us could in the Straits first, and carrying that home—and then going on to the Labrador itself. We was as early as us dare be. You'se may be sure o' that, and there were still more'n a scattered bit o' ice about. However, the little vessel handled like a fairy, and all went well till us had rounded Cape Bauld and had it all open as it were, wi' the Straits fishery right before us. For the floe ice were all off the last coast, and the Straits were as clear as us could wish 'em. I was at the tiller myself, and Bob were for'ard on t' lookout for ice, for he had eyes like a lynx, Bob had. There weren't

more'n a capful o' wind a-blowin', when plump! we hits a small piece o' ice under our lee bow. It were that small above water that even Bob never seed un, and us took no more notice of un till there comes a great shout from the women as the water was rushin' in below, and up they all tumbles on deck. Such a scramble in the dark may I never see again, please God. It seemed a sharp spike o' ice as hard as a bit o' rock had found a soft spot in one of our planks, and we was already going down head foremost.

In a few seconds we had our trap boat and fishing punts in the water and all our women safely stowed. Then it were a downright race to try to save the new big trap net. Not a moment too soon, either, for as we hauled up the last piece o' the twine the Ocean Bride took her last plunge and disappeared beneath the waves. The sea and ice once more had the best of us.

It seemed just a bit hard at first, but it were that cold and wet, and us had it that hard to make the land that, thank God, there weren't much time to think o' it, and we was so glad at last to get by a fire in a cottage on the land, us spent the whole evening a-thankin' God for his goodness in having saved us.

The very next morning an ice-hunting steamer that had been down to Labrador with a number o' crews came right in and offered to take us home. It did appear as we was going aboard, with everything gone, as if "all these things were against us." But oncst again the good Lord showed us right the opposite in his own won'erful way.

For the steamer had to call into a harbor only a dozen miles to the south'ard, and there lying off the end of a wharf lay a schooner twice as large as our Ocean Bride, all ready to go to sea. Well, sir, you may b'lieve me or not, as you likes best, but though the kettle was on the stove and the very sails up a dryin', there were no crew aboard her, only an ole man a watchin' of her, for the owner hadn't quite settled where he were going to send her for the summer. Well, sir, our skipper were acquainted with her owner, and he just up and says: "I tell you what, Captain, I'se minded just to go ashore on chance and see if I can't get you that vessel for the summer." Well, sir, the Lord had planned it just every bit, for the steamer couldn't a stopped half an hour even a-waiting. So there were the owner right on the very wharf hisself. When our skipper

had told him all about our accident, and, what's more (seeing I was a stranger and had no money), had promised to pay a hire for her hisself if so be I should miss the fish, the owner he seems a bit puzzled at first. "You see, Captain," he says, "I ought by rights to speak to the boys first, for I've just shipped a crew to send her after a load o' lumber. But, seeing as how the skipper here is a man what loves the Lord hisself, and seeing how it all seems arranged already, almost wi'out my being so much as asked, I supposes I must let her go," and wi' that he takes me by the hand and says: "You take her, skipper, and God prosper you and bless the voyage."

Two days later us sailed again for the Straits. But as the time were running up, us just went right down on to the Labrador instead o' going away down west after all the other craft, and that saved us. For the Straits fishery proved a failure, and the early craft in the Labrador all did well. Though the new craft was so large, and we had only the small crew, we got a full fare, sir, chock-a-block, and were home and sold it before September were half out. When we came to count up again we was able to clear off the

n Bride and lay the keel o' the fine vessel
you sees we in now. 'Deed, sir, many's
lay I thanks God for having led me just
vay he did, for he have taught me to know
his way is always the best way, sir, and
ı it pleased him to take to hisself the craft
was dearer to me, sir, and harder to part
too, than any that ever sailed salt water, I
learnt to know for sure, sir, that even then
ere really still a-leadin' me through "green
ıres."

SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD

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A REVERIE IN THE NIGHT WATCHES

In a little hospital like this, with a small staff of one nurse and one doctor, when a serious case makes night watches a necessity, even a roving doctor can know what a quiet hour means. At sea, in the open season, on a night watch, all is life and action. The rolling vessel—the swinging compass—the changing courses—the straining of the eyes after ice and hidden dangers—all keep every faculty alert, and occupy every passing moment.

But here in the dim light, the silent house, the stillness of the intense cold outside, such that one can almost hear the frost at work under the chilly stars, the domination of the senses by the nearness and bustle of things is relieved, and one's imagination goes a-roaming far and wide.

A bed has been moved temporarily into our pretty white enameled operating theater. A boy is in it. It is nearly four in the morning, and

I am sitting by his side. He is a fisherman's only son, ten years old. After a severe operation on the abdomen he is making a brave fight for life.

Hard by, in a neighbor's little cottage, an anxious mother is waiting for the first streak of daylight to get the news of her child. She has left her home, far away on the shores of the Straits of Belle Isle, to bring her only boy, Willie, hauled by a trusty dog team over these miles of snow—to the knife.

It is a new world to her. For never before has she seen a hospital, nay, scarcely heard of one; even a doctor is a new experience. Hoping against hope, she lingered long, before at length she ventured forth to what, in her mind, might be death to her only son. It was a supreme effort of faith.

The telltale thermometer warns me that the temperature of the boy has risen one degree——— and there is a slight flush about the cheek——— the pulse rate has reached a hundred. The boy is drowsy from a dose of morphine given because he must not move at any cost. In spite of it, he is restless between short snatches of sleep. He must be closely watched.

She Hath Done What She Could

A patient coughing noisily in the next ward—there is only a wooden partition between us—has awakened him. He has asked for a drink. Two teaspoonfuls of cold water is all I dare give him for the next twenty-four hours. He must have no more at one time— Thank God, he is asleep again.

After all what does it matter? It is only a fisherman's boy from the wilds. Who will care if a hundred such are carried seaward tomorrow, as they go seal-hunting on the ice floes? Who would care in the busy world outside, steeped in its own anxiety and cares—mindful only of its own joys and sorrows? It is cut off by wastes of ice and snow from this lone land, so that even the story could only reach their ears when the event is almost forgotten, who would care?—who should care?

Here in this silent night watch, with no one to speak to, one's thoughts go flying now across the sea—to my home in England. It is peace and quiet there. If I was only there, I needn't see these things, need take none of these responsibilities. Oh, if I could get back there, and leave others to themselves. Then, at least, I should get rest from this gnawing anxiety, for a child,

whom I never saw till yesterday—and of whom once I could say, "He is nothing to me."

There is a stir in the bed. It makes me drop my pencil, and a queer feeling rushes through me, as I see that Willie's large brown eyes are open and evidently fixed on me. How closely he seems to be watching me. Surely he could not have known my thoughts? No. It is the loneliness of the night that makes one foolishly credulous. But suppose he had read them—and I calling myself a missionary.

Thank God, he only asked for another drop of cold water—and for a pillow to be moved because already he is "so tired of lying."

Why all this restlessness? Can there be something going wrong with the wound? Alas, it is the imperfect work of my own hand. Alas, alas! What a poor instrument to represent the Master. Surely he might have sent a better surgeon than me—at least some one with a patience and love a little more akin to his own.

What would I not give for a consultation now—such as one got so readily in the old hospital at home. What price would I not pay for the advice of some great physician. Alas, even this wish is born, first of all, from a desire for relief

for myself rather than to save the boy's life—born of a desire to get rid of responsibility, and put it on the shoulders of any one willing to bear it.

Thoughts of the past now fly hurrying through my brain. Surely one might have been better fitted. How many hours I lost when just the knowledge now needed so much might have been gained. How many—

A dog has started howling outside. He is joined in loud chorus by all my four-footed friends, over twenty in number. Hundreds of miles they have carried me already across hill and dale, over sea and land, mid snow and ice. Now, out on the snow in this bitter cold, with only the stars overhead, they are contentedly making their beds this night. Few pleasures, as we know them, ever fall to their lot. Meat, in great frozen blocks, is the best food they know of, and that is often far too scarce. Yet, with every sign of affectionate joy, they will come leaping up to greet me in the morning. In spite of everything they will be ready—yes, and more than ready, eager to work for me again, and plod on at it till I have seen them drop dead uncomplaining, in their very traces.

They have brought me back to the reality of things. They seem an inspiration to come back to the hard facts again. Here am I, with but poor talents—God help me—and here is this little lad. His life must be saved. I must save it. It must be done now, and I must do it. The time and place offer to no one else this "opportunity" to be the instrument. True, it is no greater, perhaps, than other opportunities—but then, in reality all opportunities are great. Yes, and each is vast in importance, for it comes only once. Never again. Never. Am I not even now expecting to hear the footfall of the child's mother over the crisp snow outside? Though scarcely daring to risk an answer, she is coming to ask me "the news." Yes, *the* news—no news in the world is so important to her.

What can I do? Thank God, the boy is quiet again now. For myself, I can almost feel the silence. Only the clock, ticking outside, reminds me that the hand of time alone is never still. It suggests that opportunities are passing. Is there anything more I can do? Anything? My worried brain gives me no help. I seem to have done all that I can— My whirling thoughts have gone again. As a spark from the electric

button they are flashing back to familiar words, "She hath done what she could," and now they fly to Him who spoke them, while the clock outside seems to keep ticking at me, "Have you?" "*Have you?*" "HAVE YOU?"

All she could. How true they are. Yes, our powers are very, very limited.

No, no. He meant more than that. Is it that there *is* a better man present in this room after all? Does it mean that that very friend I have been so keenly wanting is really near after all? Can my professional mind think of Him as of much real value here in this prosaic operating theater as the "second opinion" I have been groaning for? Something within me resents the hope as merely a creation of my own desire. But if it is true then whatever I feared that the lad saw with those great eyes of his, He must surely know. And those unworthy thoughts of a while ago— Can it be that here and now, in a place where emotion is pre-eminently at a discount, I can really shake the burden of responsibility off on Him, and so get rest from this anxiety?

Prayer is not to replace action—the Old Book itself says so. Faith, without works, cannot save this boy, I am certain. The Old Book is too

genuine to suggest fatuous words as a narcotic for incompetence, if there has been carelessness or sloth. Perhaps here—on our very beam ends—His words mean more. Yes—in spite of His seeing our lamentable "left-undones" His love will allow the emphasis to fall on the first three, not the last two, words. May I believe it? The Master means, "*She* has *done* . . . now is the time for *me*."

How often, in a long so-called "service," has the monotoned formula, "Let us pray," served but to usher in another chance of dozing on one's knees. Can I without cant—here alone in the darkness—really expecting something that will do the boy good—can I pray? . . .

Three days have passed. The crisis is over. The mother is even now sitting for a few moments, her heart too full to speak, by her boy's bedside. I saw her kiss him, yes, and a tear fall on his face as she bent over him—so I closed the door and waited outside.

After all, perhaps it was worth while. There is a feeling of wonderful joy in my own heart, I know. I am perfectly certain that gold trinkets and such things as some call valuables can never bring *this* kind of joy. The very thought of

such things cheating any one thus, brings a smile of pity to one's lips. God give you your joys in service, dear readers. We owe you much down here, though you may think it little. You have sent of your means and of your prayers. You have sent us words of cheer. You have paid—who knows—for the very knife that wrought this joy. God bless you, and give you many more such joys, fellow-workers.

Will it not be grand when cruising next summer to visit this boy at his home? What a joyful meeting it will be! The approach to the harbor is narrow, and ofttimes dreadful. But this time it will be filled with the joy of anticipation.

May your hearts make your faces radiant with this same joy when you are waiting to see for yourselves Him who has promised to consider all these things as "done unto Him." Nay, do not shrink from responsibility. Do not dread the anxiety and the real suffering it so often entails. For in no earthly home will a follower of the Christ escape these things. Only when the golden gates are closed behind us can we expect the rest of heaven. Only, amidst it all, God give you the joys of having "done what you could," and so give you that joyful counte-

nance also which communion with Him has ever given, and must of necessity give—for it reflects his own.

NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE

NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE

It was transition time with us. The long winter frost, with but one day's thaw since Christmas, had collapsed like a house of cards with the advent of May.

The splendid ice bridges over the great bays had been shattered by the heavy Atlantic rollers, which were now permitted to heave home to the rocks as the wind had driven the ice floe far off shore.

The hard, smooth roads of beaten snow over the barrens were made impassable by jagged points of rocks, which everywhere now peeped out through them.

The universal roofing of ice and snow which, all winter, covered the patches of impenetrable scrub, would no longer support the weight of the dogs or sleigh. Even the ice on the numerous lakes had become unsafe, while foaming torrents replaced the level highways in the river beds which form our highways in the winter.

No traveling on the land was any longer pos-

sible. Even skis and snow racquets were no longer of service, and were hanging disconsolate on the walls. The sleighs had been shellacked and stowed away on their lofts till next fall's snow should make them useful again. Our faithful dogs were already barred into a large enclosure fenced with wire, so that the hospital cow, cooped up in its stable for nearly six months, might come out and hunt for the precarious living amidst the fast disappearing patches of a winter's snow.

Traveling by water offered but little better facilities. For the running ice floes from the far north everywhere covered the sea, and threatened with the least veering of the wind to the eastward to blockade the coast in an incredibly short space of time. It is not well to be nipped between the ice floe and the rocks. I was once in that position, and thankful to escape from it. There's no good arguing the matter with an ice floe. The only thing to do is to keep out of its way.

So we were feign to stand by the hospital for the time, and were not sorry, after months of incessant traveling with dogs, to enjoy a "spell" and limit our efforts to the patients that we had

at hospital, and the people within a mile or two radius from it.

"There's some men in the waiting room to see you, Doctor," said one of the maids, who had come up the hill to where, with a crowd of young fellows, I was helping to clear some land of alders, and to root out old stumps. It was a preparatory effort to improve matters for our cow.

"Is that so? Where are they from?"

"From the north, I think, Doctor."

"Well, tell them to wait. I'll be down directly. See that they get some tea and something to eat."

"Please, sir, they says it is very important, and they wants to hurry back right away."

When I reached the hospital I found that the new arrivals were making good progress with the tea. For work like they had just been through converts this into ambrosial nectar to our fisherfolk. It is the custom to offer it at all times of the day to any and all who visit the house.

"What's wrong, Nat?" I asked. "Some craft on the rocks, I suppose."

"'Tis Mark Rawson's Aleck, Doctor. He be

terrible sick. We'm come to see if you be so well pleased to come down along with us."

"Is he sick enough to die?"

"Well now, he h'aint knowed nobody since Saturday, and that be three days gone."

"How is the ice, Nat, coming up?"

"She be well off now. T'wind canted off the land about midnight, and you'se can go right down straight."

"All right, Nat. You can start as soon as you like. I'll come along after you in the motor launch."

The medicine chest that travels with our dog sleigh in winter is marked in large letters, "Lend-a-hand!" It stands ready for duty all spring until the sea is open, and forms the movable dispensary during that time on the boats.

So we were not long making our preparations, and were soon bowling along northward ho, a fine wind following us.

The wind freshening, and the night closing in very thick, we at last determined to heave to, and make a harbor some two miles to the southward of our patient's home. It was already late before we had walked across an intervening neck of land. As we approached the house it was

getting on to midnight, and so dark that when at last we reached the promontory opposite the island on which the house was stationed, we almost fell over the fisherman father who had been patiently waiting on the off chance that we might possibly come by the mainland, as we could not reach by sea. "I suspicioned you might come this way, Doctor," he remarked. He meant that he had earnestly been praying that we might attempt to push on by the land. His faith had taken form in hours of waiting in the dark here on the beach with his boat. It was the testimony of his faith. It was the effort part of his prayer.

A little wooden cottage was perched on a rocky ledge under the ægis of huge, almost overhanging cliffs. The scanty foreshore fell straight down into deep blue water, so that we stepped almost from the boat into the house. A strong feeling came over one that nature was anxious to shoulder out the human life from the place altogether.

When we opened the door to enter, the subdued light of a half-turned-up kerosene lamp, small enough at the best of times, was just sufficient to show me a crowd of people solemnly

huddled together in the tiny room that served as both kitchen and parlor. It was a bad omen, I knew, for when anyone is thought to be sick unto death on this coast, just such a lugubrious, silent crowd gathers to "see the end."

On a low, rude table at one end of the room was a bundle of heterogeneous bed-clothes, and on this, visible to all, lay the body of a beautiful little boy of four years—a regular curly-haired, rosy-faced fisher lad.

The weeping mother rose as I entered, and with one hand covering her eyes with her handkerchief, as if she did not wish to see the sight, led me over to the child's side without speaking.

There was a perfect stillness in the room. No one spoke a word. Only the stertorous breathing of the sick child broke the silence as I bent over to form some idea of what I had to deal with.

"How long since he knew you?" I asked, obliged to lay my hand on the mother's shoulder to call her attention.

Waiting in vain to stem the tears which she sought hard to restrain, she sobbed out at last: "Not since Saturday, Doctor. My own boy didn't know me."

Only a cursory examination was necessary to

satisfy me that the child's only chance for life lay in an immediate operation. It would involve the removal of a portion of the skull, and would be quite impracticable unless I could get the child to hospital.

But then at once the vision of fifteen miles of angry ocean that lay between us, and the child in this condition tossed about in our small boat prevented my saying what I thought. It seemed a pity to suggest that any means might save the child if one had only to add that that means were not available.

I was roused, however, from my brief reverie by a sudden consciousness that the mother was watching me. And even through her tears was trying to read for herself the truth which she seemed to be conscious already that I was intending to withhold from her.

She spoke first. "What is it, Doctor?" She had looked up, and I seemed to see in her face a courage that I thought she did not possess. My mind was made up in an instant.

"There's only one hope I can offer you, dear friend, and even that is but a faint one. If he were my boy I should at once take him to the hospital."

A still more absolute silence seemed to fall immediately on the room; so silent, you could almost feel it. For all these kindly meaning friends were also hanging on the Doctor's words, and again the loud, measured breathing of the unconscious lad, like the ticking of some great clock, was alone audible.

At length an older woman, rising from her seat, came over to where we were standing, and, taking the hand of the poor mother, encouraged her to take even this forlorn chance.

A little pause and then, with an energy and directness I had little expected, she looked me bravely in the face and said, "I will, Doctor; anything and anywhere to save my darling."

"His life is in higher hands than ours. No mortal can certainly promise to give you Aleck's life. All we can say is that as far as we know the hospital offers him his only chance for life."

"Then I'll come," she said eagerly. "When shall we start?"

It was dark as pitch outside, and we had yet to snatch some sleep. So we arranged to return and find shelter in a cottage near our boat, and that a party should be told off to bring the mother and child to us soon after daylight.

Not My Will, But Thine

Once again we were on the main land, and the deep, broad arm of the sea separated us from the house of sorrow. As I stumbled along over the rocky path, recent events kept revolving in my mind. Why cross that separating arm at all? Why seek trouble thus naturally shut off, as it were? Why add to cares by bringing the sorrows of others voluntarily into our lives? What a relief to shake clear of it all in the cool night air that cleared one's head, when at last we topped the brow of the hill—what a relief it would be to leave it all behind.

Yet, no—one's heart was going back over the water in the boat with that solitary father. In my mind I could still hear the plash of the oars, and they seemed to beat out in the mystery of that darkness a sweet refrain that to the Christian makes any work welcome—"ye did it unto me—unto me— unto me."

There was a tiny light in one of the fishermen's houses. All the rest had gone to bed long ago. But I recognized that the window was that of a room I had twice occupied on my winter travels. As I expected, the door was on the latch, so, going in quietly, I went upstairs to find everything ready, because, as the good fellow ex-

plained in the morning, "I mistrusted somehow, Doctor, you'se might like to come back over night."

It was an evidence of a fellow feeling and of a courtesy that is not uncommon among our tender-hearted people, thank God.

The little party with the child arrived before we were even stirring—though in truth they needed sleep far more than we did. But true love is ever self-effacing, and they betrayed no signs of their long watch.

The wind had come in from the southeast and was dead ahead, and though nothing was said, we all knew that the sea voyage in the small launch would be anything but pleasant. The mother was seated in the small scuddy, well propped up with boards, to keep her from being thrown about by the pitching and rolling of our little craft. The unconscious child, in heavy wraps, lay across her knee. A tarpaulin was fixed in a small frame to keep the flying water and the wind off, as much as possible. Steering myself involved standing close to them, and I could keep an eye on how they were getting on. Up to the first hour the mother, who was very sea-sick, caught my eye, and though she had

several times assured me she desired no help, I learnt without any doubt that all her strength and energy was being taxed to the utmost.

"You want some help. Let me take the child for a bit. You can lie down on the locker, and perhaps you'll feel better." "No, thank you," she replied, and bent down, crooning over the child as before.

Another hour had passed away. As yet she had not uttered another word. The sudden and violent jumping of our boat in the head sea must have shaken her all to pieces. Yet all she said was, "Is it very far still?" "No; that is St. Anthony head on our bow. We should have been round it by now, but for this seaway. Won't you let me take the child for a bit now? You shall have it back when we get into the smoother water around the head." "I can hold on a little longer, thank you," and again she was crooning over her child.

At length we were alongside the wharf.

Though strong and willing arms offered to bear the burden, the mother would trust it to no one till she laid it in the hospital, and our good nurse was allowed to put it to bed.

A few hours, and the operation was over, and

the little lad was back in his bed once more. The pressure on its brain had been relieved. It even spoke, and in the mother's eyes, as she came into the ward and bent over the bed, one could see the intensity of longing that it might still know her, and once more speak to her. Hope, indeed, burnt fiercely in all our hearts for a time that even yet this little life might be given us. But he who loves the children knew best, and slowly, but surely this tiny vital spark flickered out.

When I ventured up to the ward again the violence of the first burst of sorrow had somewhat subsided. The poor woman was sitting, as if exhausted, by the bedside, and yielded more readily than I had anticipated to the suggestion that she should go and take some rest.

When everything had been got ready, I ventured to ask this broken-hearted mother if she would face the journey back in the launch with her sad burden.

I was prepared to forgive an hysterical rejoinder, but she spoke calmly, even cheerfully. "No, Doctor, thank you, it is more than I could face now. I'll wait for the mail steamer next week, if I may."

The stimulus of hope that had buoyed her up on the previous voyage had died out. Yet, thank God, no void had been left in its place. Her heart was filled with a peace that passes understanding, a hope that robs death of its sting and the grave of its victory. Like David, she knew that though the child should not return to her, yet she should surely go to it.

The four days' watch by the little coffin quite alone, as it were, fifteen miles from her home and friends, would be a trying experience at the best of times. We were afraid that, worn out as she was, it would be torture to her. But she bore it bravely, and when at length the great boat came in, and we shook hands, and bade her look beyond the valley of shadows, one felt that in spite of her bitter failure, it was a song of triumph, and not a wail of despair, that was filling her soul. And it lessened the bitterness, as she said: "Good-bye, Doctor, may God reward you for your kindness to me and mine."

HOW SANTA CLAUS CAME TO CAPE ST. ANTHONY

HOW SANTA CLAUS CAME TO CAPE ST. ANTHONY

A universal robe of white had long covered our country-side, hiding every vestige of our rocky soil, and every trace of the great summer fishery. The mail steamer had paid its last visit for six months; and thus the last link with civilization was broken. Even the loitering sea-ducks and lesser auks had left us. The iron grip of winter lay on sea and shore.

At its best, the land here scarcely suggests the word "country" to a southerner—scarcely even the word "moors." For the rock is everywhere close to the surface, and mosses and lichens are its chief products. The larger part of the country we call "barrens." Few of the houses deserve even to be called cottages, for all are of light, rough wood. Most are of only one story, and contain but two rooms. The word "huts" would convey a more accurate idea of these humble abodes. The settlements themselves are small and scattered, and at this

time the empty tilts of the summer fishermen give a still more desolate aspect to these lonely habitations.

Early in December we had been dumped from the little mail steamer on the harbor ice about half a mile from shore, and hauled up to the little Mission hospital, where we were to make our headquarters for the winter. The name of our harbor was St. Anthony. Christmas was close upon us. The prospect of enjoying the conventional pleasures of the season was not bright. Not unnaturally our thoughts went over the sea to the family gathering at home, at which our places would be vacant. We should miss the holly and mistletoe, the roast beef and plum-pudding, the inevitable crackers, and the giving and receiving of presents, which had always seemed essential to a full enjoyment of the Christmas holiday.

We soon found that few of the children here had ever possessed a toy; and that there was scarcely a single girl that owned a doll. Now and again one would see, nailed high up on the wall, well out of reach of the children, a flimsy, cheaply painted doll; and the mother would explain that her "Pa had got un from a trader,

sir, for thirty cents. No, us don't allow Nellie to have it, 'feared lest she might spoil un"—a fear I found to be only too well grounded when I came to examine its anatomy more closely.

Christmas-trees in plenty grew near the hospital; and we could easily arrange for a "Father Christmas." The only question was, whether our stock of toys would justify us in inviting so many children as would want to come. It is easy to satisfy children like these, however, and so we announced that we expected Santa Claus on a certain day. There was great talk about the affair. Whispers reached us that Aunt Mary thought her Joe weren't too big to come; sure, he'd be only sixteen. May White was only going eighteen, and she would so like to come. Old Daddy Gilliam would like to sit in a corner. He'd never seen a Christmas-tree, and he was nigh on eighty. We were obliged to yield, and with guilty consciences expected twice as many as the room would hold. All through the day before the event the Sister was busy making buns; and it was even whispered that a barrel of apples had been carried over to the "Room."

In the evening a sick call carried me north to a tiny place on the Straits of Belle Isle, where

a woman lay in great pain, and by all accounts dying. The dogs were in great form, and traveling was fair enough till we came to a great arm of the sea, which lay right in our path, and was only recently caught over with young ice. To reach the other shore we had to make a wide detour, bumping our way along the rough edge of the old standing ice. Even here the salt water came up through the snow, and the dogs sank to their shoulders in a cold mush that made each mile into half a dozen. We began to think that our chance of getting back in time on the morrow was small indeed. We were also wondering that it seemed to be a real disappointment to ourselves that we should miss the humble attempt at Christmas keeping.

One thing went a long way toward reconciling us to the disappointment. The case we had come to see proved to be one in which skilled help was of real service. So we were a contented company round the log fire in the little hut, as we sat listening to stories from one and another of the neighbors, who, according to custom, had dropped in to see the stranger. Before long my sleeping bag was loudly calling to me after the exercise of the day, "We must be off

by dawn, Uncle Phil, for there's no counting on these short days, and we have promised to see that Santa Claus is in time for the Christmas-tree to-morrow night at St. Anthony." Soon, stretched out on the floor, we slept as soundly as in a feather bed.

Only a few minutes seemed to have passed when, "'Twill be dawning shortly, Doctor," in the familiar tones of my driver's voice, came filtering into my bag. "Right you are, Rube; put the kettle on and call the dogs; I will be ready in a couple of shakes."

Oh, what a glorious morning! An absolute stillness, and the air as sweet as sugar. Everywhere a mantle of perfect white below, a fathomless depth of cloudless blue overhead—and the first radiance of the coming day blending one into the other with a rich, transparent red. The bracing cold made one feel twenty years younger. We found it a hard job to tackle up the dogs, they were so mad to be off. As we topped the first hill the great bay that had caused us so much trouble lay below us, and my driver gave a joyous shout. "Hurrah, Doctor! there's a lead for us." Far out on the ice he had spied a black speck moving toward the op-

posite shore. A *komatik* had ventured over the young ice, and to follow it would mean a saving of five miles to us.

We had made a good landing and scaled the opposite hill, and were galloping over the high barrens, when the dogs began to give tongue, loudly announcing that a team was coming from the opposite direction. As we drew near, a muffled figure jumped off, and, hauling his dogs to one side, shouted the customary, "What cheer?"

Then a surprised, "The Doctor, as I live! You're the very man I'm after. Why, there's *komatiks* gone all over the country after you. A lad has shot hisself down at St. Ronald's, and he's bleeding shocking."

"All right, Jake, old friend. The turn for the path is off the big pond, is it not?"

"That's it, Doctor, but I'm coming along anyhow, 'feared I *might* be wanted."

My little leader must have overheard this conversation, for she simply flew over the hills. Yet it was already dusk when at length we shot down the semi-precipice on the side of which the little house clings like a barnacle. The anxious crowd, gathered to await our arrival, dis-

appeared before the avalanche, like a morning mist when the sun rises. Following directions, I found myself in a tiny, naked room, already filled with well-meaning visitors, though they were able to do nothing but look on and defile what little air made its way in through the fixed windows. Fortunately, for want of putty, air leaked in around the glasses.

Stretched on the floor behind the stove lay a pale-faced boy of about ten years. His clothes had been taken off, and an old patchwork quilt covered his body. His right thigh was covered with a heterogeneous mass of bloody rags. Sitting by him was his mother, her forehead resting in her hands as if she were wrestling with some inscrutable problem. She rose as I entered, and without waiting for questions, broke out with: "'Tis Clem, Doctor. He got Dick here to give him the gun to try and shoot a gull, and there were a high ballicater of ice in the way, and he were trying to climb up over it, and he pushed the gun before him with the bar'l turned t'wards hisself, and she went off and shot him, and us doesn't know what to do next—next, and—"

While she ran on with her story I cleared the

room of visitors, and, kneeling down by the boy, removed the dirty mass of rags that had been used to staunch the blood. The charge had entered the thigh at close quarters above the knee, and passed downwards, blowing the knee-cap to pieces. Most of it had passed out again. The loose fragments of bone still adhering to the ragged flesh, the fragments of clothing blown into it, and the foul smell and discoloration added by the gunpowder make the outlook a very ugly one. Moreover, there rose to my mind the memory of a similar case in which we had come too late, blood poisoning having set in, and the child having died after much suffering.

The mother had by this time quieted down, and was simply repeating, "What shall us do?"

"There's only one thing to be done. We must pack Clem up and carry him to the hospital right away."

"Iss, Doctor, that's the only way, I'm thinking," she replied. "An' I suppose you'll cut off his leg, and he'll never walk no more, and Oh, dear! what—"

"Come, tear up this calico into strips and bring me some boiling water—mind, it must be

well boiled; and get me that board over there—'twill serve to make a splint; and then go and tell Dick to get the dogs ready at once; for we've a Christmas tree at St. Anthony to-night, and I must be back at all costs."

In this way we kept her too busy to worry or hesitate about letting the child go; for we well knew it was his only chance, and she had never seen a hospital, and the idea of one was as terrifying as a morgue.

"Home, home, home!" to the dogs—and once again our steel runners are humming over the crisp snow. Now in the darkness we are clinging tightly to our hand-ropes as we shoot over the hills. Now the hospital lights are coming up, and now the lights in the windows of the "Room." As we get near they look so numerous and so cheerful that we seem to be approaching a town. Now we can hear the merry ring of the children's voices, and can make out a crowd of figures gathered around the doorway. They are waiting for the tardy arrival of "Sandy Claws." Of course, we are at once recognized, and there is a general hush of disappointment as if they had thought at last "Sandy" himself was come.

"He is only a little way behind us," we shouted. "He is coming like a whirlwind. Look out everybody when he gets here. Don't get too close to his dogs."

Only a little while later, and the barking of dogs announces the approach of the other *komatik*. But we alone are in the secret of its real mission. Some one is calling from the darkness, and a long sleigh with a double-banked team of dogs has drawn up opposite the doorway. Two fur-clad figures standing by it, steady a huge box which is lashed upon it. The light shining on the near one reveals of his muffled face only two sparkling eyes and large icicles bristling over the muffler from heavy mustache and whiskers, like the ivory tusks of some old bull walrus. Both figures are panting with exertion, and blowing out great clouds of steam like galloping horses on a frosty morning. There could be no doubt about it, this time. Here was the real Sandy Claws at last, come mysteriously over the snows with his dogs and *komatik* and big box and all!

The excitement of the crowd, already intense from anxiety over our own delay, now knew no bounds. Where had they come from? What

SANTA CLAUS'S GIFT TO THE HOSPITAL

could be in that big box? How large it looked in the darkness! Could it have really been dragged all the way from the North Pole? Luckily, no one had the courage left to go near enough to discover the truth.

The hospital door was swung open, and a loud voice cried out: "Welcome, welcome, Sandy Claws! We're all so glad you've come; we thought you'd forgotten us. Come right in. Come right in! Oh, no! don't think of undoing the box outside; why, you'll freeze all those toys out there! Just unlash it and bring it right in as it is. Come in; there's a cup of tea waiting for you before you go over to start your tree growing fruit."

There had been rumors all the week that Sandy Claws would bring his wife this year. There had been whispers even of a baby. So we could explain the second man; for the Eskimo men and women all dress alike in Labrador, which would account for Mrs. Claws' strange taste in clothes. A discreet silence was observed about her frozen whiskers.

A few minutes later another large box was carried over to the "Room.' It was full of emptiness, for the toys were on the tree long

ago. But two strange masked and bewigged figures stumbled over the snow with it, to carry the little drama to its close. So complete was the faith in the unearthly origin of these our guests, that when the curtain went up more than one voice was heard to be calling out for "Ma" and "Dad," while a lad of several summers was found hidden under the seat, when it came his turn to go up and get his "prize."

And so Santa Claus came to St. Anthony, and brought a gift for us as well as presents for the children. Indeed, the best was the one he had kept for us, who had so unworthily thought that the outlook for a happy Christmas was but a poor one. Sleeping overhead, in a clean, white cot, free of pain, and with a good fighting chance for his life, lay our bright-faced lad—Clem. The gift to us this Christmas day was the chance to save his life. We would not have exchanged it for any gift we had ever heard of. At the old home, where doctors are plentiful, such a gift were impossible.

"The great life-giving gift to the world that Christmas stands for, was to be *ours* to thus faintly re-echo on this needy, far-off shore."

Christmas has gone long ago. Already we

have heard ominous groaning of the heavy ice along the land-wash, warning us that the open sea is getting nearer, and that soon our icy fetters will be broken. The toys and trinkets from the poor spruce tree have already lost most of their pleasure-giving powers. Must it not always be so, at last, with the things we are apt to call "valuables."

"Clem" has gone to his home again. He is able to run and walk like the merry lad he is. For not only his life, but his limb also, has been saved to him. And we have been taught once more that the true joy of Christmas—nay the true joy of Christ the Lord—comes ever of "giving" and not of "getting."

To *all* these opportunities are given if we will only see them. By word and by deed how many more we should find were ever being offered us, to make the brief day of life fuller and richer, if we but sought them with half the eagerness with which we pursue least worthy ends.

How glorious—how valuable—does every moment of life become when once we see that *we* have been placed of God here in this world "for others;" placed here for the same reason that

He was given to the world on the first Christmas Day.

Alas, alas, that we have ever been blind enough to think it was " cant " to say, " It is more blessed to give than to receive."